THE BIRTH OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR

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THE BIRTH OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR

Propaganda, Espionage, and Military Violence from WWII to the Vietnam War

Jeffrey Whyte

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Introduction: 'Switching Back to Good Old PSYOP'

Psychological warfare is back. Animated by concerns over Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election and UK Brexit referendum, psychological warfare has returned to popular political discourse in breathless *exposés* such as Cambridge Analytica whistle-blower Christopher Wylie's headlining claim that 'I made Steve Bannon's psychological warfare mindfuck tool' (Cadwalladr 2018). In US military and policy circles too, psychological warfare has returned. Briefly redesignated as the somewhat evasive 'Military Information Support Operations' (MISO) under the Obama administration, the *Army Times* reported in 2017 that the '100-year-old Defense Department psychological operations community' would be 'switching back to good old PSYOP' (Myers 2017). The return of psychological warfare signals the United States' renewed commitment to waging its proverbial 'war of ideas' in the geopolitical arena. With it, however, comes a clutch of misconceptions and mythologies. Psychological warfare, for example, is not one hundred years old (nor is the Department of Defense). However, as the director of Information Operations at US Army Special Operations Command Lt. Col. Brad Carr told the *Army Times*,

> given Russian disinformation, given this new world where the information fight is becoming more complex and nuanced, there's a level of pride when I can say, I'm a PSYOP soldier in a PSYOP unit that has this lineage and did these kinds of things. (Myers 2017, n.p.)

This renewed embrace of psychological warfare stands in stark relief to prior approaches that have sought to downplay the duplicitous, clandestine, and even conspiratorial connotations the term has tended to carry. The Obama administration's use of the term MISO, for example, was meant to suggest a 'kinder, gentler update to the PSYOP mission' and to 'ease the suspicion PSYOP seemed to generate' (Myers 2017). However, as an internal Pentagon email from 2010 made clear, even this was 'just a terminological change, not a substantive change.

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The term PSYOP was anachronistic and misleading. MISO is a more accurate description of the activities and programs at issue' (Ambinder 2010, n.p.).

This terminological shuffle was, however, only the latest in a cycle of avowals and disavowals that has defined psychological warfare's turbulent history. When the United States Information Agency (USIA) was established in 1953, for example, it consolidated and expanded the global network of psychological warfare posts that the United States had established during the Second World War. Though the USIA represented the crystallisation of US psychological warfare in the international arena, it was ironically also the moment the United States formally disavowed the term, reaching instead for anodyne options such as 'international communication' and eventually 'public diplomacy'. However, rumours of psychological warfare's death were greatly exaggerated. As one USIA officer later recalled, 'from a strictly professional viewpoint, [the USIA] is "psychological warfare," pure and simple, as everyone will recognize … But for the better chances of its success, it would appear wise not to call it that' (Perusse 1958, 34).

This cycle of avowal and disavowal, artifice and candour, makes defining psychological warfare a difficult proposition. This is perhaps by design. As the editor of the first major collection on psychological warfare put it,

> most people who write or talk about psychological warfare use the term as Humpty Dumpty did in his discussion with Alice concerning 'glory'. He told her, 'When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more or less'. (Daugherty 1958a, 11)

As the United States again returns to 'good old psyop', this book sets out not to define psychological warfare, but to account for the multiplicity of its meanings and practices at different times and in different places. This requires first a demystification of psychological warfare's founding mythologies. Despite the *Army Times*' celebration of the United States' '100-year-old psychological operations community', the term in fact emerged only in the early 1940s, and then only under extraordinary circumstances. Even among its first theorists and practitioners, however, there was a desire to elevate psychological warfare beyond its historical contingencies to imagine for it an ancient origin, a transhistorical reality, and an elemental existence within the nature of war itself. Paul Linebarger's (1948) foundational *Psychological Warfare*, for example, imagined Gideon's ruse against the Midianites in the Old Testament as psychological warfare's first known instance. Linebarger similarly reimagined other historical figures as 'psychological warriors', including Athenian general Themistocles, Chinese emperor Wang Mang, Genghis Kahn, and Thomas Paine. In his *The Nature of Psychological Warfare*, Communication Studies pioneer Wilbur Schramm (1953, 5) similarly reproduced Linebarger's historical castings, adding that 'nations have been waging it since there have been nations'.

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While these accounts suggest a picture of psychological warfare that, as Lt. Col. Brad Carr put it, 'has this lineage' both ancient and modern, they conspire to obscure the particular and contingent circumstances under which psychological warfare emerged in the United States in the early years of the Second World War (Myers 2017). This book is therefore in part historiographical, a corrective to these and other accounts that fail to explain how and why psychological warfare emerged when and where it did. Despite its relatively recent date, the story of psychological warfare's origin is no less incredible, involving international espionage, forged maps, famous anthropologists, the origins of the US intelligence community, and more. Chapter 1 tells the largely untold story of the birth of psychological warfare in the United States, a story of major figures in government and industry working to reimagine the meaning and significance of propaganda in modern war. It is a story of deception, not just between warring nations, but also concerning the nature and existence of psychological warfare itself. Psychological warfare was more than it seemed but also in some ways less. In accounting for the specific circumstances of its birth, this book attempts to parse fact from fiction to present a critical account of psychological warfare's arrival on the US political scene.

Challenging psychological warfare's mythologies is necessary to the extent that they endure in contemporary political life. In the days immediately prior to the United States' invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, for example, *Time* magazine celebrated the American psychological warfare tradition, reporting that 'American armies have used psyops since the Revolutionary War', referencing the distribution of handbills to British soldiers at the Battle of Bunker Hill (Waller 2001). Similarly, less than a month prior to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, the *Chicago Tribune* invoked psychological warfare's ancient origins to sanction its use ahead of the coming invasion. 'Psyops is one of the oldest forms of warfare', it reported. 'Alexander the Great used it when he left huge pieces of body armor behind his advancing army to convince would-be pursuers that his force was made up of giants' (Kilian 2003). These accounts of psychological war worked not only to justify its use, but also to naturalise it into an imagined historical and military tradition. This book therefore seeks to unsettle the picture of psychological warfare as a natural element in the history of war. It shows on the contrary that psychological warfare is a modern contrivance that requires scrutiny on its own terms.

Beyond this historiographical goal, this book also grapples with the moral mythologies of psychological warfare. Drawing upon Derek Gregory's critique of what he calls the 'moral economy of bombing', I consider the moral economies that likewise underwrite the prosecution of psychological war. I do so not only to illuminate the political ideologies animating psychological warfare in their own right, but also to show psychological warfare's close relationship to the development of modern airpower. In his study of bombing, Gregory traces four major narrative themes that have justified practices of bombing: (1) that 'bombing saves lives' by

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raising the bar for going to war and shortening its duration, (2) that 'bombing is manly' and an affirmation of masculinity, (3) that 'bombing is objective' and based upon scientific expertise, and finally (4) that 'bombing is lawful', that is, 'not only legal, but a means of imposing law on the lawless' (Gregory 2017b, np). Detailing how practices of psychological warfare and bombing bleed into one another, this book shows how these moral economies were also entwined. It therefore critiques the popular construction of psychological warfare as a humane, potent, scientific, and orderly exercise.

This book also maps a political geography of psychological warfare, contrasting the construction of its moral economy in the US political imagination with its actual prosecution in theatres of war. I show that US psychological warfare on the battlefield contravened if not wholly subverted the picture it presented to the US public. This book therefore traces the double life of psychological warfare: at home, where it has been constructed as a reflection of the United States' commitment to waging warfare humanely; and abroad, where it has been used to expand the scope and scale of military violence. Chapters 1 and 3 explore the conception, growth, and maturation of psychological warfare in popular US political discourse during the Second World War and the early years of the Cold War respectively. By contrast, Chapters 2 and 4 show how actually existing US psychological warfare was waged in theatres of combat, first in the Second World War and subsequently in the counterinsurgency campaigns of the Vietnam War. I argue that these contrasting visions of psychological warfare, while ostensibly in conflict, in fact worked together to make US warfighting permissible and to sanitise its image in popular US political consciousness.

Finally, this book argues that the advent of psychological warfare transformed political imaginaries of national and international security. It shows that with the concept of psychological warfare emerges a new vision of security in which the contingent circulation of information (Dillon & Lobo-Guerrero 2008) is understood as a correlate of security both at the scale of population and at the scale of the individual. Put another way, the logic of psychological warfare transformed public opinion from a reflection of democratic political will into a militarised terrain on which the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs of the population became objects of war. Corresponding to this imaginative transformation, the status of the individual political subject is transformed from one of democratic citizenship in a political body to that of a *combatant*, either witting or unwitting, voluntary or involuntary. In short, psychological warfare claims to be a necessary and essential dimension of everyday life in which the 'knowing subject' becomes an object of war. This book therefore considers how psychological warfare produces in ordinary individuals a kind of 'obligation to know' (Foucault 2014b, 291) in which individuals are compelled to understand themselves not as political subjects engaged in forms democratic deliberation, but as subjects of war engaged in a form of continuous conflict in which the

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individual must comport the contents of their inner life to meet the prerogatives of national security. Psychological warfare thus produces obligations for individuals not only to know particular facts about the world and world politics, but to cultivate a certain kind of self-knowledge, a mode of thinking about oneself in the context of an intractable and ubiquitous form of ideological conflict. More than just *what* we must know, psychological warfare tells us *who we must be* (Walker 1997).

In telling us who we must be, psychological warfare also in turn offers reassurances about who we are, expressed perhaps most vividly in its claim to be a humane, life-saving alternative to killing in war. In advancing its moral economy, psychological warfare tells those on whose behalf it is waged that it is done in a precise, humane, and civilised fashion (Zehfuss 2018). Psychological warfare thus involves more than a series of practices and techniques to strategically manipulate individuals abroad; it involves the production of political fictions about itself and about the nature and reality of warfare more broadly. More than an historical curiosity, these political fictions continue to animate the violence of war while also paradoxically disavowing it. On the United States' use of psychological warfare against the Taliban in the days prior to the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, for example, *Time* magazine reported that in addition to 'raining terror from the skies, an elaborate psychological operation is fighting for the hearts and minds of Afghans' (Waller 2001). Weeks later, the BBC (2001) similarly reported that 'Taleban fighters are defecting as US-led air strikes continue', and that while the scale of this defection was unclear, coalition psychological warfare was 'doing its best to ensure that more desertions follow'. 'If an adversary's will to fight can be removed,' the BBC explained, 'it follows that lives will be saved.'

This episode illustrates Gregory's moral economy of bombing, but it also highlights the special role played by the logic of psychological warfare in inverting the meaning of bombing from a life-taking to a life-saving practice. In the early days of the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003, the *Chicago Tribune* similarly articulated psychological warfare's paradoxical moral economy: 'the goal' it reported, 'is to avoid bloodshed by prompting the surrender of enemy troops' (Kilian 2003). Quoting retired Rear Admiral Stephen Baker, the *Tribune* continued that psychological warfare

> might save hundreds of thousands of lives on the Iraqi side and might save lives on the coalition side, and possibly not require us to hit a thousand targets on day four, five and six, just the first three days. (Kilian 2003)

If psychological warfare offers the promise of waging war without killing, it has helped animate political imaginaries of what critical scholars of war have called 'liberal warfare' (Dillon & Reid 2009; Duffield 2011; Evans 2011; Reid 2010, 2011) and its attendant humanitarian logic (Fassin 2007, 2011; Reid-Henry, 2014, 2015; Weizman 2011). As this book endeavours to show, however, psychological

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warfare's humanitarian commitments remain a political fiction. Far from limiting the scope of military violence, psychological warfare has in fact enabled killing not only by making war more permissible but also by supplying the very rationale for killing itself, as detailed in Chapters 2 and 4 of this book.

Psychological warfare has nevertheless carried these fictions into the 21st century. During the second Battle of Fallujah in November 2004, US psychological warfare was touted as a humanitarian effort to avoid civilian casualties during the assault on the city. The claim was perhaps made in response to the widespread international publicity generated by mass civilian causalities during the first Battle of Fallujah in April 2004. As a leaked report from the US Army National Ground Intelligence Center (2004) noted, while the military outcome of the first assault on Fallujah was a 'foregone conclusion', it was also a 'political and informational battle whose outcome was far less certain'. As the report noted, scenes of death and destruction, especially on Arab satellite news channels, put pressure on the United States to halt military operations. As the US-backed Coalition Provisional Authority documented, Al Jazeera alone used the so-called 'excessive force theme' eleven times between 14 and 20 April. The leaked report went so far as to cite by name the Al Jazeera reporter Ahmed Mansour, who during the first week of April 'filmed scenes of dead babies from the hospital, presumably killed by Coalition air strikes' (US Army National Ground Intelligence Center 2004, 13).

If publicity surrounding civilian causalities was understood as a factor limiting the viability of military operations, during the second Battle of Fallujah US psychological warriors worked to reassert the permissibility of killing. To widespread applause in American media, US forces established a tight perimeter of checkpoints around the city of Fallujah, instructing women and children to evacuate through leaflet drops and loudspeaker addresses, classic media of modern battlefield psychological operations.[1] The move was hailed as an attempt to isolate insurgents and ensure that 'innocent civilians' were given the opportunity to evacuate the city, an apparent illustration of psychological warfare's life-saving mission. On the ground, however, a different picture emerged. While the perimeter allowed some women and children to leave, at least those for whom it was possible, checkpoints in effect *kept in* 'men of fighting age', who were categorically turned back at the perimeter's edge. Worse, the designation of 'fighting age' remained highly discretionary, with no fast lower limit. While US psychological warriors facilitated a limited evacuation of Fallujah, in practice the evacuation masked the transfiguration of Fallujah's civilian population into legitimate, killable targets. Contradicting immensely lower official figures, *Guardian* reporters estimated that between

[1] Headlines included the *New York Post*'s 'Fallujah D-Day Due: Women and Children Told to Evacuate' (Latham 2004); ABC News's (2004) 'US Tries to Spare Civilians in Fallujah'; and the Associated Press's 'US Warplanes Hit Fallujah; Leaflets Warn Civilians to Flee' (Krane 2004).

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30,000 and 50,000 civilians remained in the city as the assault began (Monbiot 2005). It was an example of the durable contradictions that have defined psychological warfare's moral economy: state terror and collective punishment abroad presented to domestic audiences as evidence of humanitarian benevolence.

More than just making killing permissible, psychological warfare has long provided the very rationale for killing itself. In Chapter 2, I show how psychological warfare came to be tied to acts of killing, beginning with the practice of 'morale bombing' in the Second World War. Conceived as a way to depress the fighting and industrial capacity of enemy populations, 'morale bombing' updated punitive models of colonial 'air policing' with a social scientific gloss. In Chapter 4 I show how the logic of morale bombing was adapted to counterinsurgency warfare in Vietnam, where psychological warriors believed they could produce in their enemies 'the kind of weariness against which even courage and faith are often helpless' (JUSPAO 1965a). Reflecting the wider contradictions between the United States' use of punitive violence against civilians and apparent efforts to 'win hearts and minds', I show that psychological warfare has since its inception served as a rationale for expanding the scope and scale of military violence.

Contrary to its claims, however, 'morale bombing' and its descendants rarely if ever produced the stated goal of weakening the resolve of enemy soldiers and civilians. On the contrary, bombing has been shown to *strengthen* morale and to inspire hate, not despair, in the hearts of its victims. If US psychological warfare has been steeped in historical and ethical mythologies, this book also questions psychological warfare's ability to parlay social scientific expertise into levers of political power and social control. If the moral economy of psychological warfare depends on a picture of psychological warfare as *objective* – as a highly specialised, technical, and esoteric pursuit – this book challenges psychological warfare's claim to scientific accuracy and efficacy. It argues on the contrary that psychological warfare has produced a kind of 'social science fiction' about itself, a fiction in which it appears as a highly complex and rigorous technology for waging war. I show that while psychological warfare may have indeed succeeded in employing social scientists, there was often, sometimes by the scientists' own admission, little to back them up outside an air of perceived authority.

This too has defined political imaginations of psychological warfare in the 21st century. It was again 'while B-52s rain terror from the skies' that 'an elaborate psychological operation [was] fighting for the hearts and minds of Afghans' (Waller 2001). Profiling Fort Bragg's 4th Psychological Operations Group, which dropped over 18 million leaflets onto Afghanistan in the invasion's first two months, *Time* magazine described

> an eclectic organization like no other in the US Army, made up of 1,200 special ops soldiers, academics, linguists and marketing experts, whose weapons are words and images. (Waller 2001)

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If General David Petraeus's 2006 *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* imagined counterinsurgency as the 'graduate level of warfare' (US Department of the Army, 2006), the idea of psychological warfare as an objective practice helped maintain the image of US counterinsurgency as a scientifically grounded enterprise. However, few US psychological warfare efforts paid tangible dividends. When it was not mired in scandal, the United States' Arabic-language Al Hurra television station, for example, commanded less than 0.5 per cent of audience preference across the Arab world's largest and most influential countries (Linzer 2009). According to one University of Maryland analyst, Al Hurra's ratings were so low that in 2009 they fell below the poll's margin of error (Linzer 2009). Despite costing more than $600 million between 2004 and 2009 alone, Al Hurra struggled to establish a line of communication to the Iraqi people.

In his study of early post-war Communication Studies research on psychological warfare, Christopher Simpson (1994, 65) observes what he calls the 'push button fantasies' of psychological war researchers in journals such as *Public Opinion Quarterly*. While the so-called 'hypodermic needle' model of frictionless persuasion has lost purchase in Communication Studies, it continues to pervade professional and popular imaginaries of psychological warfare. This book therefore sets out to trouble this image, to show its construction through appeals to authority in the social sciences, and to reveal the often shaky ground upon which the prestige of psychological warfare stands. While psychological warfare is often portrayed as a highly technical, expert enterprise, closer scrutiny reveals a simpler game of violent ultimatum. As the *Chicago Tribune* reported in the early days of the United States' invasion of Iraq, US psychological warfare was often based not on a complex matrix of social scientific technique but on a raw threat of violence. The *Tribune* described one psywar leaflet dropped over Baghdad, which read:

> Do not fire at coalition aircraft. If you choose to fire, you will be destroyed. Coalition forces will attack with overwhelming force. The choice is yours. (Kilian 2003)

More than guile or academic expertise, this example illustrates a US psychological warfare driven by the threat of violence – not by a persuasive battle for 'hearts and minds', but through coercive gestures designed to terrify and intimidate. It was, moreover, a typical psychological warfare effort insofar as it sought to produce in its target a specific action or behaviour. In the terms of its moral economy, it reflected the 'law-fulness' of psychological warfare, an effort to produce order and 'impose law on the lawless'. As discussed further in Chapter 4's analysis of US psychological warfare in Vietnam, it has been a long-held dream of US psychological warriors to produce governable subjects through the administration of violence. While populations have been crucial objects for intervention by psychological warriors, the individual has remained a privileged object of psychological warfare theory and practice. This emphasis on the individual, I argue, reflects

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psychological warfare's aspiration to a kind of liberal governmentality. Whatever its contradictions, the leaflet's injunction for its subject to 'choose' between life and death is consistent with this aspiration to subjugate individual targets on a stilted axis of personal and individual choice.

If US psychological warfare's dream of creating, as Matt Farish has put it, 'new, modern persons in an alien space' has run up against the contradictions of US foreign policy, creating governable subjects at home has been a more achievable task (Farish 2010, 137). While this book aims to challenge the myth of psychological warfare's frictionless efficacy, it is nevertheless the case that psychological warfare efforts aimed inward at the US public have been largely more successful than those aimed abroad at the populations of geopolitical rivals. On this account, Chapter 3 details a covert US psychological warfare operation, not against foreign publics or leaders, but against ordinary Americans during the formative years of the Cold War by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). While Radio Free Europe is today understood as an overt arm of US public diplomacy, its origins as a covert programme run by the CIA are largely overlooked in public memory. In the CIA's (2007, n.p.) own estimation, however, its effort to deceive Americans about Radio Free Europe's true origins was 'one of the longest running and successful covert action campaigns ever mounted by the United States'. This success was driven in part by the CIA's social and professional access to elite figures in business, government, and especially publishing, radio, and broadcast. The case study again highlights the importance of geography for psychological warfare: it was on the domestic front, not in hostile theatres of war, that US psychological warriors operated with greatest ease.

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1

'A New Geography of Defense'

> *Propaganda was often talked about as though it were a magical force emancipated from the limitations of time, place, and figure … We know that propagandists are socialized in bodies politics whose specific contextual features set limits on potential perception, imagination, and behavior, and that propagandists seek to influence audiences whose socialization is similarly circumscribed.*
>
> (Lasswell 1927)

Psychological warfare did not arise out of nowhere. While it appeared almost overnight in the pages of the American press in the summer of 1940, understanding its sudden emergence requires careful attention to the political and historical context in which it unfolded. Amid the geopolitical uncertainty of the conclusion of the 1939 'phoney war', with France under German control and Britain on the back foot, the spectre of psychological warfare appeared in US political discourse. It was said to be a new and unprecedented form of war, waged by Germany at a distance, often unbeknownst to those it attacked. While the issue of propaganda was familiar to all who had experienced the Great War, psychological warfare purported to be something *different*: not just the ruses, deceptions, and sabre-rattling of committees on information, but a new and scientifically calibrated weapon for controlling the thoughts, beliefs, and opinions of civilians in enemy countries.

Such a weapon, of course, did not exist; however, the construction of German psychological warfare in the US press and academy served as a pretext for persuading reticent Americans to intervene in what many believed was 'Europe's war'. Perhaps ironically, the picture of German psychological warfare presented in US political discourse was itself a kind of propaganda, replete with exaggerated and often fabricated claims about new and scientifically derived forms of manipulation and influence from abroad. Though psychological warfare would soon become an integrated if contested feature of the Second World War, its appearance in US political discourse between 1940 and 1942 is best understood as a kind of social-science *fiction*, what one Office of Strategic Services (OSS) agent dramatised as

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'scientific knowledge of the inner forces which determine opinion and control nerves' (Taylor 1941). Despite its fantastic existence, the spectre of psychological warfare nonetheless gave birth to a new geopolitical imaginary in which the security of populations became tied to new ideas about 'psychological defence' that were both national and personal in scope. Drawing upon popular anxieties concerning the threat of foreign infiltration and domestic fifth columns, the idea of psychological warfare transformed into matters of war the political beliefs and opinions of ordinary citizen, as well as the circulation of news and information that produced them.

This chapter tells the story of the concerted group of individuals and organisations that scripted the drama of German psychological warfare in the United States between 1940 and 1942. Drawn from the ranks of American journalists and intellectuals, these individuals revolved around the offices of William 'Wild Bill' Donovan, the so-called father of central intelligence, during the formative months of his first intelligence organisation, the Office of the Coordinator of Information (CoI). While the CoI's successor agencies – the OSS, founded in 1942, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), founded in 1947 – have been well treated by historians, less has been written on the formative history of Donovan's CoI, and even less on the specific role that the psychological war scare played within it. This chapter details the largely forgotten history of a propaganda campaign about propaganda campaigns, and the strange circumstances under which psychological warfare came about in the United States.

Academic treatments of psychological warfare exist primarily in two primary contexts: its place within the broader militarisation of the Cold War social sciences (Farish 2007, 2010; Pinkerton *et al.* 2011), and the revival of the Cold War 'battle for hearts and minds' during the 21st century's 'war on terror' (Anderson 2011; Belcher 2012; Ek 2000; Gregory 2008). Critical emphasis remains on the Cold War (Robin 2003; Solovey 2013), and students of both Psychology (Herman 1995) and Communication (Mattelart 1994; Simpson 1994) have written accounts of their field's involvement in psychological war research and practice. While it is generally accepted that modern understandings of 'psychological warfare' coalesced around the Second World War and the formalisation of its wartime propaganda activities, little attention has been given to the specific circumstances under which the term entered the American lexicon in the years prior to US entry into the Second World War.

By contrast, post-war efforts to formalise its theory and doctrine attempted to naturalise psychological warfare into conventional military histories. Written in partnership with Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, Office of War Information (OWI) veteran Paul Linebarger's (1948) *Psychological Warfare* became a foundational text, citing Gideon's ruse against the Midianites in the Old Testament as the first known use of psychological

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warfare. Linebarger reimaged historical figures as 'psychological warriors', including the Athenian general Themistocles, Chinese emperor Wang Mang, Genghis Kahn, and Thomas Paine. Beginning in 1953, The US Army also contracted Johns Hopkins University's Operations Research Office to produce three definitive volumes, beginning with *The Nature of Psychological Warfare* by Wilbur Schramm, another OWI veteran and a pioneer of Communication Studies.[1] Schramm (1953, 5) reproduced Linebarger's vignettes on psychological warfare's ancient origins, claiming that 'nations have been waging it since there have been nations'.

This chapter opposes these post-war naturalisations and 'searches for origins' (Foucault 1977a) by accounting for the specific and contingent circumstances under which psychological warfare, and the *idea* of psychological warfare, emerged in the United States between 1940 and 1942. While deception, coercion, and persuasion may be 'as old as nations', the emergence of psychological warfare in these years was the result of a concerted effort stressing not its antiquity and timelessness, but its radical *novelty* as 'Hitler's frightful weapon' (Taylor 1941). An episode on the eve of the Pearl Harbor attack illustrates the fevered pitch that pronouncements on psychological warfare had taken by the end of 1941. In a speech to a civics club in Madison, Wisconsin, Nelson Rockefeller warned his audience of the 'new kind of psychological war' being waged by Germany in the western hemisphere. In his capacity as Roosevelt's Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs – the United States' propaganda outlet to South America – Rockefeller issued a warning about German psychological war: total war, he argued, affected not just armies but 'all people and nations in their entirety'. The new reality of psychological war, he claimed, demanded not only material but also 'spiritual, moral and mental forces'. The need was unprecedented, he claimed, due to Germany's 'perfection of the methods of psychological warfare', to which he credited German victories in France, Norway, and Sweden. Psychological warfare, Rockefeller insisted, had created '*a new geography of defense*' (*New York Times*, 7 December 1941, emphasis mine).

This chapter grapples with the meaning and significance of the 'new geography' of psychological warfare. It argues that more than a transformation of the territorial or physical landscapes of war, this new geography was largely an *imaginative* one that placed the ordinary citizen at the centre of vast and sprawling geopolitical intrigue. It attends to the strange beginnings of 'psychological warfare' in the United States, first by detailing the construction of its 'new geography of defense' by the journalists and intellectuals surrounding Donovan

[1] Founded in 1948 at Johns Hopkins University under contract with the US Army, the Operations Research Office (ORO) was among the first centres to refine the field of operations research, which relied heavily on mathematical modelling of and applying principles of scientific management to military operations. See Farish (2010, 136).

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and his CoI. Following recent studies on the early American intelligence community (Barnes 2006, 2008; Barnes & Crampton 2011; Barnes & Farish 2006; Crampton 2014; Crampton *et al*. 2014), it furthermore shows the construction of psychological warfare as a formative moment in US–UK intelligence relations (Aldrich 2004; Dittmer 2015).

In its second half, this chapter considers the contributions of American geographers to the popular construction of psychological warfare. Detailing the sensational political drama in which the obscure German geographer Ewald Banse was placed at the centre of Anglo-American alarmism, the chapter concludes by considering how psychological warfare not only reflected American anxieties about German geopolitics (Crampton & Toal 1996; Murphy 2014; Toal 1996) but was also foundational to the articulation of the United States' own geopolitical imagination of empire (Smith 2003): against the foil of German psychological warfare's 'strategy of terror', the United States set the so-called strategy of truth that would define its propaganda efforts during the Cold War.

Throughout, this chapter draws attention to the ways that the spectre of psychological warfare hailed individuals, producing in them an obligation to defend themselves against its invisible yet omnipresent threat. While propaganda may have been be 'as old as nations', the advent of modern psychological warfare was distinguished by its demand that ordinary citizens reflect upon themselves – their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs – as objects of modern military struggle. Not only was this a demand for individual citizens to understand themselves as *objects* of psychological warfare, it also produced in them an obligation to become its *subjects* and to act accordingly: one became part of psychological war whether one wished to or not.

Fifth column lessons

In the years following the First World War there occurred in the belligerent nations what propaganda historian Philip Taylor (1980, 486) has called a 'propaganda boom' in literature exposing and debunking the excesses of wartime propaganda. 'Vexed at the unknown cunning which seems to have duped and degraded them', as Harold Lasswell (1927, 2) put it, popular outrage was voiced against propaganda which 'stood in relation to information as murder to killing' (Cull 2008, 9). It was in this political context, in the summer of 1940, that 'Wild Bill' Donovan, a Wall Street lawyer and First World War veteran, made the first moves toward establishing what would become the CoI. Regarded as the 'father of US central intelligence', Donovan's new agency would be succeeded in 1942 by the larger OSS, which itself laid the groundwork for the establishment of the CIA in 1948. In 1940, however, before his official appointment as Coordinator of Information, Donovan had been tasked by President Franklin D. Roosevelt with selling war to a war-weary

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American public.[2] Donovan's work to construct psychological warfare as Germany's 'secret weapon' against the United States therefore attempted to leverage yet balance popular anxiety about foreign propaganda against the perception that Donovan himself was engaged in a propaganda effort against the American public.

In this task Donovan was aided by partnership with a secret branch of British intelligence called the British Security Coordination (BSC), led by the Canadian industrialist William Stephenson, the storied spy 'Intrepid', headquartered in New York at 30 Rockefeller Plaza (Conant 2009; Mahl 1998; Stevenson 2000). Together, Donovan and Stephenson tapped contacts in the academy, radio, and press in support of several well-connected interventionist organisations, including the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, Henry Luce's Council for Democracy, and the Fight for Freedom Committee.[3] Prefiguring psychological warfare, these interventionist organisations publicised the threat of a purported 'fifth column' in the United States. *The Fifth Column* had been the title of Ernest Hemingway's only play, a political drama published in 1939 informed by his experience of the Spanish Civil War. The term gained currency in the United States, however, primarily through the efforts of interventionists such as *Chicago Daily News* reporter Leland Stowe, who in covering Germany's invasion of Norway, and later in his exposé-style *No Other Road to Freedom* (1941), claimed that Norway had been defeated by a 'fifth column' that had sapped 'national morale' through propaganda, rumour, and sabotage. Norway, he claimed, had not been captured by armed force but 'by means of a gigantic conspiracy' and a 'perfectly oiled political plot … first and foremost from the inside' (MacDonnell 1995, 113), an explanation for German victories that soon gained currency in the European and North American press.

Central to stories describing Germany's fifth column successes was an emphasis on public opinion as a new and contested terrain of war. Alarmism about Germany's fifth columns sought to imbue public opinion with a new and urgent political significance by framing it not as a reflection of democratic will, but as a new kind of political-military front vulnerable to enemy attack. A full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* (10 June 1940) by the Committee to Defend America was typical: under the large-type headline 'STOP HITLER NOW', the ad's text instructed Americans to guard against the Nazi 'fifth column', which was 'well trained in the dissemination of poisonous propaganda' and had as its objective 'the destruction of national unity'. The ad's copy, written by Roosevelt's close friend and future OWI fixture Robert Sherwood, encapsulated an interventionist line on the fifth column that emphasised the sophistication of Germany's

[2] In the summer of 1940, only 3 per cent of Americans favoured declaring war on Germany, though almost all desired British victory (Cantril 1940).

[3] Key figures included Council for Democracy founder Henry Luce and his *Fortune* magazine protégé C. D. Jackson, who went on to occupy top posts in the new field of psychological war, first at the OSS and later in the Eisenhower administration (see Chapter 4). Other agents of the BSC are thought to include Walter Lippman, Dorothy Thompson, Walter Winchell, and *New York Times* publisher Arthur Hays Sulzberger (Mahl 1998). See also Trudel (2017).

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propaganda while framing public opinion as a battleground ceded to Germany by isolationists who opposed US intervention in the war (Laurie 1996, 38).

Despite the *Sturm und Drang*, there was scarce evidence of a German fifth column in the United States. Historian Philip Knightley (1987) has suggested it was a myth created by British spies to excuse their own intelligence failures, particularly around Germany's pre-emption of Britain's own planned invasion of Norway. It was nonetheless a useful political expedient for branding isolationists as agents or 'dupes' of German propagandists. As the American historian and isolationist Harry Elmer Barnes noted in late 1940, 'the fifth column nonsense has taken the place of the atrocity stories in the first World War'. Isolationism, he added, was increasingly branded as unpatriotic 'fifth column activity' (p. 560). Isolationists for their part rallied around the America First committee, founded in 1940, which drew an incongruous constituency, from anti-war activists and communists to nativist fascists and pro-business conservatives (MacDonald 1941). Celebrity aviator and white supremacist Charles Lindbergh (1939) was its highest-profile spokesman, though other members included future presidents Gerald Ford and John F. Kennedy. Recriminations between isolationists and interventionists intensified in the wake of the March 1941 Lend-Lease debates, which drastically increased American material support to Britain. One interventionist committee – the Friends of Democracy, Inc. – accused America First of being a 'Nazi transmission belt' (Cole 1953, 109). This prompted Lindbergh to rejoin, in an August 1941 radio address, that

> the one-fifth who are for war call the four-fifths who are against war the 'fifth column'. They know that the people of this country will not vote for war, and they therefore plan on involving us through subterfuge. (Cited in Cole 1953, 54)

It was not a baseless accusation: in addition to his work with the BSC in the United States, planning for measures against the fifth column was the ostensible purpose of Donovan's fateful trip to London in the summer of 1940 where the groundwork for his CoI was laid (Troy 1981, 53). In London, Donovan was advised on the 'problem' of the fifth column by British intelligence, and while it had no effective existence, its invocation in the American press was crucial to justifying the need for Donovan's new intelligence agency.[4] In this light, Donovan's role in constructing the threat of a German fifth column in the United States can be counted among his first and most successful propaganda campaigns in favour of US intervention.

Central to the effort was the American journalist Edgar Ansel Mowrer, who accompanied Donovan to London at the request of Frank Knox, Roosevelt's Secretary of the Navy, but also Mowrer's employer and owner of the *Chicago Daily News*. Upon their return from England, Mowrer fanned the flames of fifth column alarmism in a series of widely published editorials that were reprinted as a pamphlet titled 'Fifth Column Lessons for America'. At Roosevelt's insistence, Donovan signed his name to the text, and Knox himself penned its foreword

[4] As the Associated Press reported, Donovan was 'slated for a big post' on the merits of his 'investigations of the fifth column' in the summer of 1940 (*New York Times*, 6 July 1941).

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(Troy 1981, 33). The text formalised several tenets of what would soon become psychological war. 'Since no country has ever been unanimous', it argued, 'a fifth column has existed potentially in every land in every war.' Through this logic, US public opinion appeared not as a mechanism for democratic deliberation but as a new front in modern war. Furthermore, according to the text, it was 'in a democracy that the Fifth Column can function most freely and effectively' (Donovan & Mowrer 1940, 6). The front could be anywhere and *everywhere*.

Tabloid exposés of fifth column plots followed Mowrer and Donovan's interventions. A map (Figure 1.1) published by the anti-labour Constitutional Education League (1941) purported to show an incredible concentration of fascist and communist fifth column organisations within the United States. The locations presumably corresponded to the hundreds of unions, clubs, and organisations listed on the reverse side, many linked to German, Italian, Eastern European, and Black Americans. The Congress of Industrial Organizations was especially condemned. A note on Nazis called them 'brown Bolsheviks' and 'Stalin's stooges', implying socialist fraternity despite the looming eastern front. Bolstering a similar panic concerning German geopolitical theory, the map attributed to German geographer Karl Haushofer the claim that a 'strong committed army' could be 'recruited overnight in the United States'.

The map warned that in the battle against the fifth column, 'to be effective you must be informed'. The pointed use of the second person stressed the ordinary individual's responsibility and obligation to defend the nation through forms of personal political awareness, a conception of security tied not to the materiality of war but to the cultivation of specific kinds of political and especially geopolitical knowledge. A tabloid broadsheet, Beware the Fifth Column! (1940), similarly prescribed self-defence through geopolitical awareness, reproducing a map from the New York *Daily Mirror* (Figure 1.2) illustrating the 'frightening story' of a possible German invasion from South America. The reader was instructed to note air bases and routes, invoking Roosevelt's (1940a) warning that German air raids could be launched from the United States' southern flank. Together the maps recalled what Heffernan (2000b, 272) has identified as the 'hysterical geography' of the early 20th century in which controversy in Britain was fabricated over foreign spies, invasion, and the role of geographical knowledge at war. As Heffernan (2000b, 272) argues,

> spy stories reached a crescendo of collective hysteria after 1914, with the more popular newspapers cynically abusing public anxiety to boost circulation figures. Lord Northcliffe's *Daily Mail* carried dozens of articles … emphasising the weakness of Britain's defences against enemy agents who were apparently operating at will amongst an unsuspecting British public, sketching coastlines and fortifications, perusing Ordnance Survey maps, and secretly preparing for invasion.

Rooted within a geographical imagination established by the popular literary genres of espionage and invasion literature (Hughes & Wood 2014; Kirkwood 2013),

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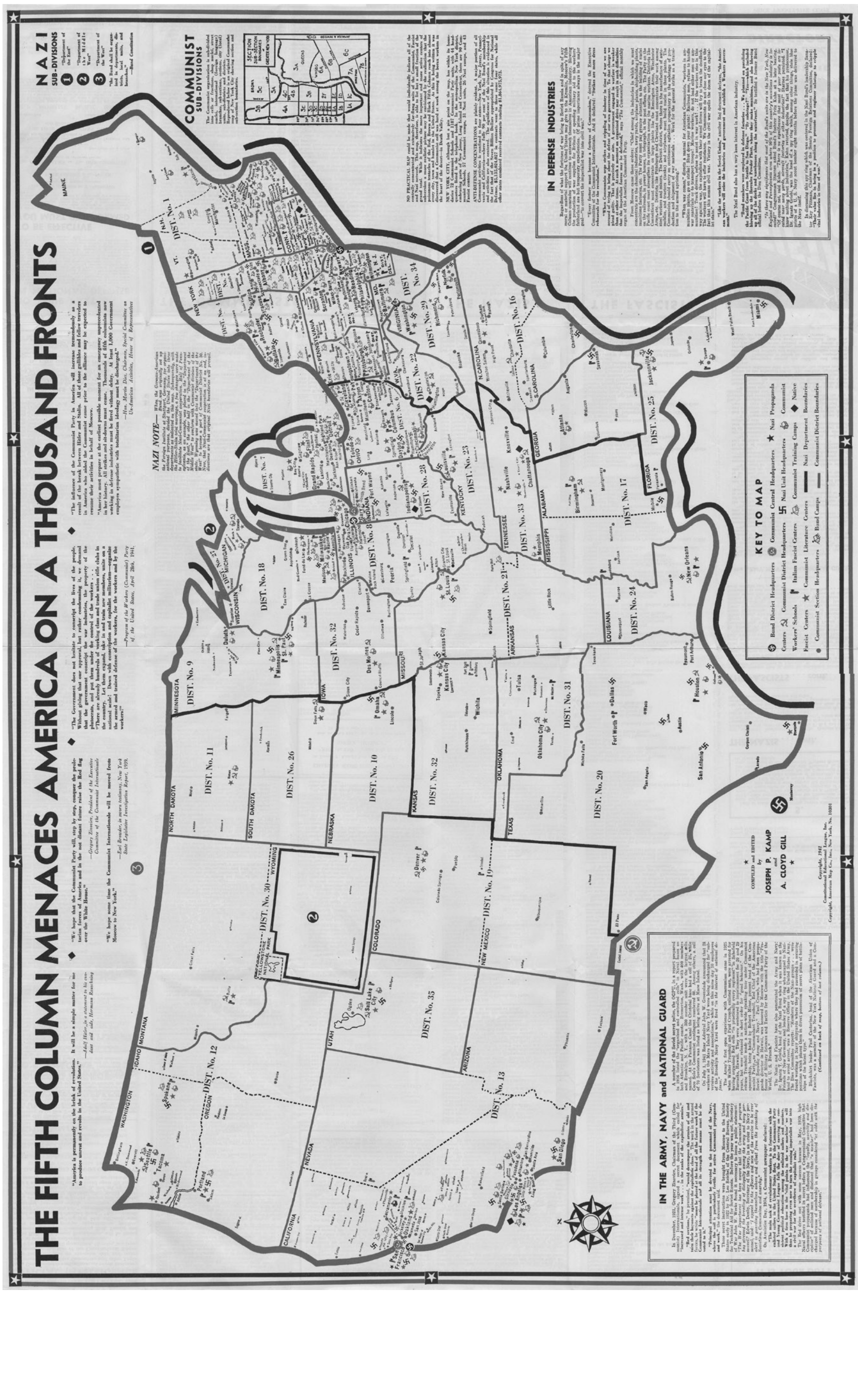

Figure 1.1 The fifth column menaces America (Constitutional Education League 1941)

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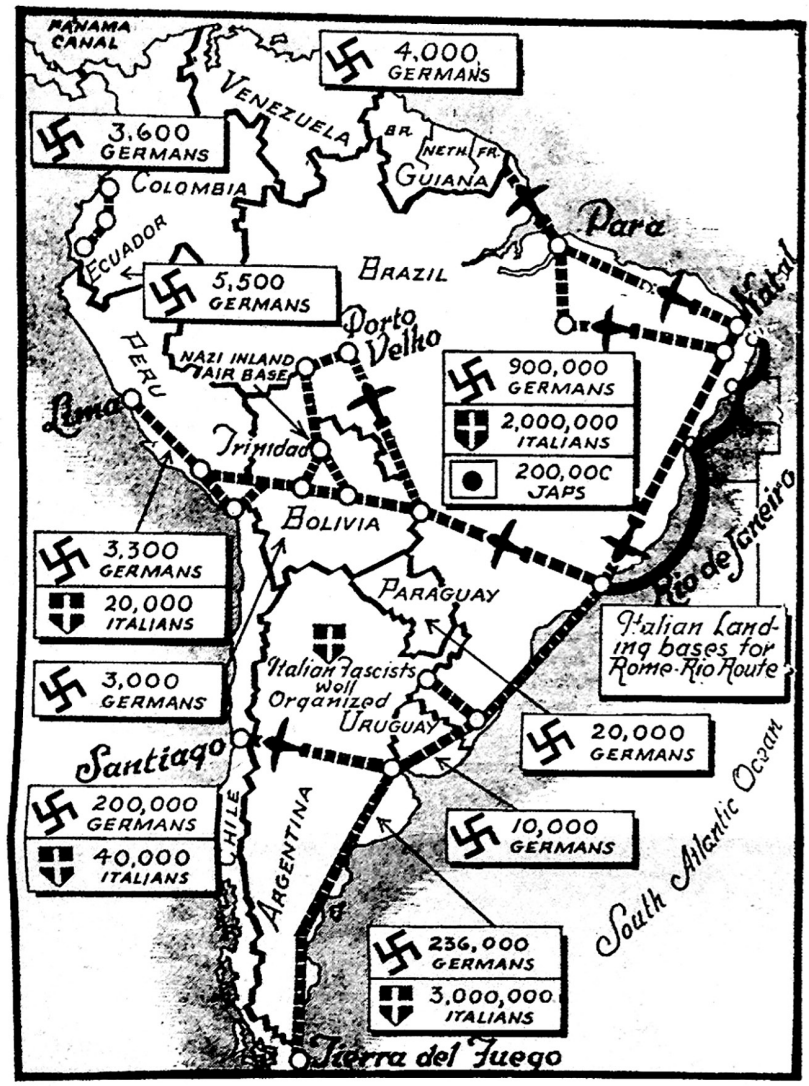

DAGGER AT OUR BACK!—This map tells a frightening story—a story full of menace to the United States. It shows how our neighbor, South America, is thickly populated with enemies of the United States and Fifth Columnists of many nations, all eager to attack us. Germany alone has 1,400,000 of her people in South America. Tens of thousands of Italians and Japanese also live there, as the map shows, and they obey the orders of their masters across the seas. Note Nazi and Fascist air bases. This map is reproduced with permission from the editorial page of the *Daily Mirror* of New York.

Figure 1.2 The fifth column menaces South America (Beware the Fifth Column 1940)

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early 20th-century invasion anxieties were harnessed to pursue domestic political agendas. Thus, as Heffernan notes, outlandish claims that 'hundreds of thousands' of secret German agents operated in Britain proliferated alongside calls for both a massive rearmament of the British fleet and compulsory conscription across the empire. Fifth column alarmism can therefore be understood to have produced its own 'hysterical geography' in which geopolitical plots subverted everyday political life, and South America became a 'dagger at the back' of the United States.

Within the alarmist context they helped create, Donovan and Mowrer produced several of the first overtures to the fifth column's 'psychological' dimension by claiming that Germany maintained a secret 'psychological laboratory' in Berlin where it produced its fifth column propaganda. The claim was similar to contemporary assertions that Karl Haushofer, Germany's leading geopolitician, operated a secret 'Institute for Geopolitics' in Munich (Murphy 2014; Smith 2003; Toal 1996). Though no such institutes existed, the American press amplified both claims, portraying German Psychology and Geopolitics as complementary sciences for waging a surreptitious war against the United States. A key source for both claims was Herman Rauschning, whose 1939 book *The Revolution of Nihilism* introduced American readers to Haushofer as the 'geopolitical mastermind' of Germany's war effort. A former Nazi Party member, Rauschning, after fleeing Germany in 1936, wrote several books denouncing the party, including his 1940 *Conversations with Hitler*, which in the 1980s was exposed by the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* as a fabricated text.[5] Whether or not they were aware of the fabrication, Donovan and Mowrer (1940, 6) drew heavily upon Rauschning's *Conversations with Hitler* to connect German propaganda to the fifth column threat and its psychological features. Through Rauschning, they quoted the presumptive Hitler's claim that

> the place of artillery will in future be taken by revolutionary propaganda, to break down the enemy psychologically before the armies begin to function at all. The enemy people must be demoralized and ready to capitulate, before military action can even be thought of … Mental confusion, indecisiveness, panic, these are our weapons.

Though not yet 'psychological warfare', fifth column alarmism served to acclimate the US public to the idea that psychology had become a new and unprecedented terrain of war. Donovan and Mowrer's claim that the danger of the fifth column was specific to democracies was significant. 'Despotic or totalitarian countries ruthlessly suppress [the fifth column] at home while exploiting it elsewhere', they wrote, while it was 'in a democracy that the Fifth Column can function most freely' (p. 6). Through the lens of the fifth column, US public opinion now appeared not as a reflection of popular political will, but as a new

[5] See Malanowski (1985) and Janssen (1985). The US edition was ominously titled *Voices of Destruction*.

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front in modern war in which popular democracy was a strategic liability. The fall of France – a 'masterpiece of the Fifth Column' (p. 8) – was instructive: riven with class conflict between a fearful ruling class and a working class unwilling to pay the cost of war 'in sweat and blood', Donovan and Mowrer attributed France's defeat to its inability to 'effectively deal with enemy propaganda' (p. 16) despite its 'all-seeing police' and political centralisation. 'How much chance has the decentralized and pluralistic American democracy', they asked, 'unless it learned from the experience of Germany's European victims and took the necessary steps in time?' (p. 16).

The rhetorical force of framing 'democratic pluralism' as a vulnerability to psychological and fifth column attack presaged a still enduring theme of psychological war, namely that domestic cleavages and antagonisms – specifically those concerning race and class struggles – served the interests of foreign powers and imperial rivals that sought to 'divide and conquer' the constituencies of too-liberal, too-permissive democratic polities. 'Those personal privileges which in our democracy we value so highly', wrote Donovan and Mowrer, 'make us particularly vulnerable to this new form of warfare' (1940, 2). The logic was clear: domestic race and class struggles supported enemy psychological warfare objectives and must therefore be understood not in terms of democratic civil society, but in terms of *war*. The theme of democracy as liability furthermore anticipated criticism based on the profound unpopularity of interventionism in US public opinion. It also articulated a logic of political exception, what Kenneth Burke wryly identified as 'the present need to defend democracy rather than simply to use it'. As Burke noted, the military motive meant that 'the disfranchised, such as the natives of India or the Negroes of the South, can logically be asked to defend democracy as a purpose – even when they could not be asked to defend it as an actuality' (1942, 405).

As a forerunner to the concept of psychological warfare, fifth column alarmism therefore articulated a logic of democratic exceptionalism based on a new concept of war in which foreign mass propaganda and clandestine infiltration combined to make a nation's domestic civilian population – their thoughts, opinions, and beliefs – a new 'psychological front' of modern warfare. It presaged Nelson Rockefeller's 'new geography of defense', unsettling conventional assumptions about when and where war begins. However, it was not until 'psychological warfare' was properly articulated that this geopolitical imaginary took on its full expression. In the meantime, Donovan's proposed course of action became the interventionist standard, namely that the United States should prepare and raise its psychological defences. Citing an unsourced figure, Donovan suggested the scale of spending he envisioned to meet the task. 'How above all can foreigners living under relatively mild and civilized governments be induced voluntarily to betray their own countries for Hitler's Germany', he asked? 'It seems mysterious.

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The answer is $200,000,000 spent annually on organization and propaganda abroad. The immensity of this sum is the secret' (p. 10).

Into the front

> 'For in the war of nerves the French and British were not simply pitted against Germany, but against a geographical-ideological complex.'
>
> Edmond Taylor, *The Strategy of Terror*, 1940

The proper introduction of the idea of psychological warfare to the US public was made most directly by Edmond Taylor, a journalist working for the *Chicago Tribune*'s Paris office. After the fall of France in the summer of 1940, Taylor wrote and rushed the publication of *The Strategy of Terror: Europe's Inner Front*, which built upon fifth column themes established earlier by Stowe, Mowrer, and Donovan. Though Taylor is often omitted from histories of psychological warfare, his work predates the term's commonly recognised origin – the Committee for National Morale's 1941 *German Psychological Warfare* – by a full year. In contrast to the Committee's academic tone, *The Strategy of Terror* (1940, 2) offered a kind of pulp 'tabloid realism' (Dalby 2007) purporting to take readers 'in to the front' for a view of 'the havoc wrought by psychological war on the battlefield of the mind'. Though sensationalist, Taylor's book advanced important and enduring claims about the existence and nature of psychological warfare, namely that civilians are its targets, that it is guided by scientific expertise, and that it is unbound by space and time.

Though it is difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the relationship, Taylor was an asset of the BSC (Mahl 1998), which, with the support of Donovan and Roosevelt, leveraged contacts in the US press to disseminate covert and unattributed interventionist propaganda to the American public. Taylor was, moreover, one of the 'remarkable foreign correspondents' personally recommended to Donovan by playwright Robert Sherwood for employment at the CoI, even *before* its formal establishment in July 1941 (Troy 1981, 85). While the early and enduring nature of Donovan's relationship with Taylor raises questions that secrecy obscures, Taylor became a major figure at Donovan's OSS (Smith 1972), where he remained loyal to Donovan through several interagency disputes, notably with the OWI's Sherwood (see Winkler 1978).

As one colleague at the CoI later recalled (Poynter 1944), the Office's early efforts to recruit 'topflight talent' among journalists had largely failed since 'before Pearl Harbor … the idea of working for government propaganda was repugnant'. However, according to his colleague, the ambitious Taylor 'had a more cynical attitude than, say, Lowell Mellett [of *Why We Fight*] … a philosophic difference'. As a secret memorandum from Donovan to Brigadier General W. B. Smith reveals,

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the 30 Rockefeller Plaza office where Taylor was based 'served as cover for the circulation of both true and misleading information' (OSS 1942, 306). As Donovan noted, secrecy surrounding the New York office was so acute that much of the necessary background was 'unwritten and accessible only through oral conference'. Unbeknownst to his readers, it was from this institutional context that Taylor introduced the concept of psychological war to the American public. Though a largely forgotten figure, it was Taylor who advanced the first and most sensational claims concerning the existence and nature of a German conspiracy to control the minds of the American people.

A central theme of Taylor's reporting on psychological warfare was its unmooring of prevailing spatial and temporal norms governing war and conflict. Echoing Donovan's claim that a fifth column could take hold 'in any land', in *The Strategy of Terror* (1940, 4) Taylor stressed that psychological warfare had 'no limits in space since the front is everywhere'. In a remarkable three-page editorial in the *New York Times*, Taylor (1941) reiterated the point, quoting a presumptive German Colonel Blau that 'this [new] type of propaganda war is not bound by space or time'. Then, citing the German geographer Ewald Banse, Taylor argued that psychological war's new temporality meant that 'effective propaganda must begin in times of peace and must score its decisive successes prior to an actual declaration of war'. The claim that psychological war was 'not bound by space or time' was a direct rejoinder to the isolationist principle that, as Charles Lindbergh (1940) put it, the United States 'need not fear a foreign invasion' on account of its geographical isolation by 'two great oceans'. With 'no limits in space' and a front that was 'everywhere', the spectre of psychological war therefore obviated the *very possibility* of isolation, what Roosevelt (1940b) had called 'the naiveté of … retiring within our continental boundaries'.

This geographical imagination of psychological warfare was in part sustained by the advent of shortwave radio in the 1920s. With broadcasts capable of reaching the continental United States, Germany had indeed made forays into transoceanic propaganda throughout the 1930s, however few tuned in. Numerous surveys in the early 1940s found that an American listenership to German shortwave was virtually non-existent, with one study going so far as to suggest that 'few attempts by a national government to influence popular opinion abroad have been made in a seemingly less fertile area than German short-wave broadcasts to the United States' (Greaves 1940, 601; see also Schuler & Eubank 1941).

In Taylor's account, however, German psychological warfare was driven by the latest advances in German science and engineering. Again echoing Mowrer and Donovan, Taylor claimed that German propaganda was calibrated in a secret 'psychological laboratory' in Berlin, a story approximating the contemporary fiction that 'geopolitical mastermind' Karl Haushofer operated a secret Institute

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for Geopolitics in Munich (Crampton & Toal 1996; Murphy 2014; Toal 1996). The claims nevertheless contributed to a picture of Germany's advanced military science, and the United States' apparently halting progress in the field. Ironically, Taylor also advanced a nearly opposite and contradictory motif, reprising First World War propaganda themes on the barbarous incivility of German *Kultur*. 'In one sense', Taylor (1940, 70) recalled of his experience of German psychological war in France,

> it was like some magical war of witch-doctors in the jungle, primitive savages willing one another to destruction, and in fact the mentality of some of the arch-propagandists like Goebbels seemed to me very close to that of primitive witch-doctors … Yet the cold-blooded technical organization and the scientific knowledge back of this modern magic were very far from the jungle … German propaganda was scientifically controlled and checked in a special 'psychological laboratory' attached to the Ministry of Propaganda.

Despite its incongruous invocation of preternatural expertise, *The Strategy of Terror*'s account of Germany's 'scientific knowledge back' was patently untechnical. Rather, Taylor's (1941) account of German psychological warfare was a kind of social-science fiction in which Germany possessed 'scientific knowledge of the inner forces which determine opinion and control nerves'. An otherwise risible example of the 'hypodermic needle' model of propaganda (Katz *et al*. 1955), it nonetheless foreshadowed what Simpson (1994) calls the 'push button fantasies' of post-war American Communication Studies and its dream of a technocratic and frictionless management of public opinion.

Significantly, Taylor (1941) claimed that in addition to knowledge of the decisive 'inner forces', German psychological warfare was informed by *geographical knowledge* – by 'exact knowledge of the population against whom [their] propaganda offensive is directed'. For Taylor, it was geographical intelligence that had 'streamlined and perfected' Germany's psychological warfare. Identifying the Munich Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Geopolitik as a key arm of the Nazi Propaganda Ministry, Taylor presented a picture of psychological warfare calibrated by technical advances not only in psychology, but also in geopolitics. In Taylor's writing, German geopolitics and psychological warfare conspired together to wage a war beyond the friction of distance with 'no limits in space'.

A foreboding sense of deterritorialisation was therefore central to these fledgling articulations of psychological war. However, as Toal (1996, 181) notes, 'every deterritorialization creates the conditions for a reterritorialization'. If American interventionists sought to construct psychological warfare as the annihilation of the space of American isolationism, they also attempted to re-territorialise it in terms of an ideological and individualised 'battlefield of the mind' where, as Taylor (1940, 1) writes, 'ideas and ideologies clash in ordered ranks, disciplined like soldiers'. Indeed, Taylor's territorial metaphors prefigured with zeal those of

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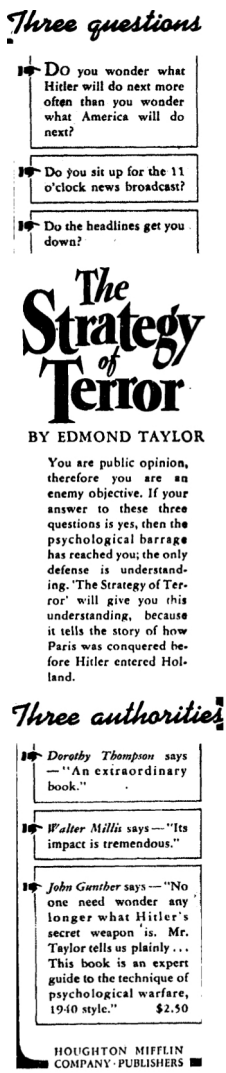

Figure 1.3 An 18 June 1940 advertisement for *The Strategy of Terror* was among the first instances of the term 'psychological warfare' in a major US newspaper (*New York Times*, 18 June 1940)

the Cold War social sciences seeking to target the 'inner landscape' (Farish 2007). Through a melodramatic 'war of nerves', Taylor invited readers to imagine themselves as 'nerve privates' in a new kind of war. Dramatising the crisis, *The Strategy of Terror*'s promotional copy (Figure 1.3) employed another second-person address: 'you are public opinion, therefore you are an enemy objective' (*New York*

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Times 1940, 18 June). If fifth column alarmism articulated the idea of internal threats from abroad, psychological warfare went further still to pose the *individual as such* as its primary target. This individuation of psychological war furthermore produced what Foucault (2014b, 291) called 'an obligation to know', that is, an individualised responsibility to understand oneself not only as an object, but also as a subject of psychological war: 'the psychological barrage has reached you', the book's promotion continued; 'the only defense is understanding'.

The understanding in question was the interventionist axiom that isolationists, wittingly or not, sustained a German conspiracy to divide and conquer the United States. A corollary to the claim, however, was the radical new premise that the thoughts, beliefs, and opinions of individual civilians were now the terrain of a new and intractable mode of war. Not only did this individualisation of psychological war further obviate the possibility of isolation, it also sought to personalise responsibility by making ordinary civilians liable for defeats on the 'battlefield of the mind'. In framing psychological defence in terms of an *obligation to know*, interventionists were further able to transpose public opinion from the political register of democratic deliberation to a military register of self- and national defence. In posing ordinary Americans as 'nerve privates' of psychological war, Taylor constructed a political imagination of war that transformed civilians from passive spectators into active participants, a simulacrum of personal agency against the 'cartographic anxieties' (Gregory 1994) of a psychological invasion heralded as continental and individual in scope. If German psychological warfare was indeed a 'strategy of terror', Taylor framed personal resistance to it as a thrilling and exhilarating opportunity to participate in war from a distance, where 'ideas and ideologies clash in ordered ranks, disciplined like soldiers'.

Morale panic

The idea that ordinary citizens could participate in psychological defence took most definite shape in the concept of 'civilian morale', a concept emerging from and in response to the spectre of psychological war. While soldier morale had become a major issue during the First World War, during the early years of the second, civilian morale remained a fledgling concept primarily tied to British discourses of civilian resiliency during the bombings of London and Coventry. If Taylor's construction of the individual as the 'nerve private' of psychological war articulated its individual scale, civilian morale suggested an aggregation of these individual struggles at the scale of the population. What emerged was a new concept of security, linked to a collective *obligation to know*, and to the premise that knowledge, and soon 'truth itself', could make both individuals and populations secure in psychological war.

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The organisation of the discipline of Psychology prior to and for the purpose of fighting the Second World War has received little sustained attention; however, internal critiques of the field help trace its trajectory through and after the war (Faye 2011; Finison 1984, 1986; Hoffman 1992; Johnson & Nichols 1998; Neiburg & Goldman 1998). These accounts aid in understanding how, through the concept of civilian morale, the field of Psychology was drawn into the broader construction of psychological warfare before and after 1942. As Finison (1986, 30) suggests, the problem of morale did *not* begin as an issue within the field of psychology; rather, 'important forces and influential figures outside the profession dictated the formulation of the problem as a problem'.

The context of the field was significant. The interwar years had seen a boom in Psychology graduates, with unemployment in the field becoming a significant concern by the late 1930s. In part to address the issue, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) was founded in 1936 to advocate for the application of psychological expertise to problems faced in government and industry. Commenting on the SPSSI's first yearbook, *Industrial Conflict* (1939), member Arthur Kornhauser affirmed the organisation's belief that 'psychologists can be and should be important technicians engaged in the vital battles of the day' (Finison 1979, 34). For Kornhauser and other members of the SPSSI, psychologists could use their scientific neutrality to become 'intermediaries between the citizen and the state' (p. 29).

It was in this context of the profession's push into public administration that the concepts of civilian morale and psychological war entered the lexicon of professional and academic psychology in the United States. Psychologists were not totally unprepared. By 1939 the American Psychological Association (APA) formed an Emergency Committee to organise psychologists for the possibility of American entry into the war. Propaganda and morale were discussed, though they sat alongside a plurality of issues mirroring those addressed in the First World War, that is, the selection and classification of personnel, soldier fatigue, aviation training, shell shock, and so forth. When morale was discussed, it was understood as *soldier* morale and the psychological problems attached to the performance of soldiers in battle. As of 1939 the concept of civilian morale and psychological warfare did not yet exist in the field. A year later, however, civilian morale had become a widespread topic not only in academic but also in popular political discourse. As President Roosevelt stressed in a 26 May 1940 'fireside chat' radio address, 'our moral, our mental defenses must be raised up as never before' (Roosevelt 1940b). Eager for war work, psychologists organised another Emergency Committee in August 1940 under the National Research Council's Division of Anthropology and Psychology (Dallenbach 1946). The committee held a conference in November of the same year to determine ways that psychologists could contribute to research in the new area of civilian morale,

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with Harvard's Gordon Allport – soon to be psychological warfare's organising force in the discipline – serving as both conference chairman and the SPSSI's representative to the committee.

Though the conference was held to discuss 'at a technical level the contributions that professional psychologists might make to the problems of morale' (Faye 2011, 16), few technical plans were made. Faye notes that the majority of discussions centred on trying to 'define the scope of morale work and the place that social scientists should occupy within it'. Uncertainty about what psychologists might do sat uneasily beside certainty that it must be done. As Leonard Doob (1941, 227), a prominent member of the SPSSI, wrote,

> it was felt that in this way the [SPSSI] could render a public service at a time of crisis. Nothing was said concerning how war and war propaganda could be analyzed; it was simply and enthusiastically believed that psychologists were capable of doing this.

A compendium to the November 1940 conference appeared in a June 1941 APA-sponsored issue of the *Psychological Bulletin* where, in addition to standard treatments of issues such as personnel selection, training, fatigue, and so forth, bibliographic reviews of both morale (Child 1941) and propaganda (Smith 1941) were published. However, the *Bulletin*'s bibliography on propaganda contained almost no sources from the field of Psychology, recommending instead texts across a number of other fields, including political scientist Harold Lasswell's (1927) *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, historian George Bruntz's (1938a) *Allied Propaganda and the Collapse of the German Empire in 1918*, sociologist Hans Speier's *Class Structure and Total War* (1939), public relations pioneer Edward Bernays's *Speak Up for Democracy* (1940), and the soon-to-be-standard text of Edmond Taylor's *The Strategy of Terror* (1940).[6]

Psychological Bulletin's (Child 1941, 399, 416) bibliography on morale scrambled to make the concept professionally actionable, suggesting it might operate along the lines of the more established concept of 'psychological adjustment'. Initial observations, however, remained of limited inspiration, and it was ultimately concluded that

> the psychological literature is most meager of findings with respect to the problems of civilian morale. It is to be hoped that psychologists will seize the opportunity to extend and apply our understanding of these and other problems that have been reviewed here.

Thus, as Finison (1986) suggests, the formulation of the 'problem of morale' as a problem for psychologists was dictated by figures outside the profession. It was in these years, moreover, that the 'virtuous cycle' of government employment

[6] Though Child (1941) does not cite *The Strategy of Terror* in his morale bibliography, he does cite an article on morale and the French collapse written by Edmond Taylor for *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

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produced for social psychology the 'critical mass it needed for survival' (Johnson & Nichols 1998, 70). However, there were detractors. A 1941 editorial in the *Psychologists League Journal* suggested that

> morale is a means to an end. What end? And will the methods employed gain morale only to lose its goal? Would psychologists persuade people to sacrifice and endure against their fundamental and ultimate interests? Would they seek to maintain self-defeating morale in which living standards are propelled downward, civil rights abrogated, labor coordinated, minorities persecuted? (Cited in Finison 1979, 5)

Despite objections, organisation within the field of Psychology helped produce the first major monograph on psychological war in the summer of 1941. Titled *German Psychological Warfare*, the book was published by the Committee for National Morale (CNM), an interventionist advocacy group formed under the umbrella of Henry Luce's Council for Democracy and drawing numerous members from the SPSSI. Indicative of the extent to which national morale and psychological warfare appeared on the American political scene as twin concepts, the CNM brought further publicity to the issues while positioning itself as an information and advisory service to government on the 'problem of morale' (CNM 1941a, 1).

Behind the scenes, however, the CNM served as a recruiting ground for the nascent American intelligence community, with many of its members going on to work for the OSS and the OWI. Edmond Taylor, already an agent of the CoI, was a member, as was Donovan's close collaborator and co-author Edgar Ansel Mowrer. CBS radio journalist Elmer Davis was chosen from the CNM's ranks as the OWI's first director, while Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson lent celebrity to the CNM before joining the OSS in 1942. It was, however, in the field of Psychology

[7] Also on the committee was Frank Stanton, who would become a key player in American psychological warfare. Among Stanton's positions were President of CBS, Chairman of the Board of the RAND Corporation, Advisor to the United States Information Agency (USIA), and contributor to CIA-front Radio Free Europe. He was JFK's first choice for director of the USIA, and also LBJ's, but he declined the role, becoming instead chairman of the President's Advisory Commission on Information. He was sent to Vietnam in this capacity to improve American public relations there and to advise on how the USIA could 'reduce the high visibility of the American mission abroad' (Cull 2008). See also Schiller (1969).

[8] The book's editor was the remarkable yet relatively unknown Ladislas Farago, a journalist with a flair for sensationalism, hyperbole, and outright fabrication. Farago's (1963, 1967) books *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph* and *The Broken Seal* were the basis for the popular 1970 films *Patton* and *Tora! Tora! Tora!*, respectively. In its internal classified journal *Studies in Intelligence*, however, the CIA's reviewer (Fishel 1968, 76) of *The Broken Seal* lamented that 'it was perhaps inevitable that Ladislas Farago, veteran spinner of espionage and other yarns, would sooner or later turn his attention to Pearl Harbor'. Similarly, the CIA's reviewer (1962) of Farago's 1961 *Burn after Reading* noted the latter's 'penchant for dressing up his stories', and his 'passions [which] sometimes lift him quite beyond the drab terrain of history'. In Farago's (1974) *Aftermath*, he broke the tether, making the wild claim that he had met in South America not only Hitler's presumed-dead secretary Martin Bormann, but also the Nazi doctor Josef Mengele (Dorril 2002, 95).

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that the CNM's recruitment was most prodigious. As Ellen Herman (1995, 43–54) shows, Harvard's Gordon Allport (1941a, 1941b, 1942) was the discipline's voice of mobilisation for morale work, acting as a covert liaison between the profession and the OSS/OWI during the war. Psychologists on the CNM who went on to work at the OWI include Leonard Doob, Hadley Cantril, and Geoffrey Gorer (Reinisch 2103, 191), while Kurt Lewin, Gardner Murphy, and Goodwin Watson went to the OSS (Cone 1997, 61; Schlesinger 2013, 350).[7]

German Psychological Warfare was meant to address the paucity of literature suggested by the *Psychological Bulletin*'s bibliographic reviews, and unlike the tabloid style of Taylor's *The Strategy of Terror*, it sought to reach a general audience through middlebrow appeal. As the *New York Times* review noted, more than a research guide for scholars, it was 'an excellent survey for the general reader' (Davis 1941).[8] Published a month after Taylor's extended editorial in the *New York Times*, the book was made up of a seventy-page annotated bibliography, mostly of interwar German military texts, prefaced by an eighty-page polemical exposé of German psychological warfare. The exposition was divided into three parts, though ironically only the latter third's twenty pages dealt with psychological warfare as such, the former two sections outlining conventional issues surrounding personnel selection, soldier fatigue, and so forth.

In his preface to the monograph (CNM 1941a, 1), CNM chairman Arthur Pope made the incredible claim that 'the present war is in large measure ideological' and that 'ideas are being used for political and military purposes with greater skill and ruthlessness than ever before'. Just as Heffernan (2000a, 31) notes that early geopolitics 'masqueraded as a new, rational and scientific approach', so too did the CNM's psychologists pull deep from the well of scientistic alarm, lending authority to the first wave of journalistic accounts from Taylor, Mowrer, and Stowe. However, the CNM leveraged its credentials more to issue warnings than to offer explanations, claiming that 'Germany has mobilized and employed the resources of scientific psychology with an unprecedented audacity and thoroughness which, in our view, marks the latest advance in the art of war' (1941a, 1). The exhaustive enumeration of German academic literature, though often tangential to the issue of psychological warfare, was assembled to support the claim that Germany had and continued to sustain a scientifically calibrated psychological attack on the United States.

The text of *German Psychological Warfare* was quite literally a catechism for the psychological citizen-warrior: ninety-one answers to ninety-one questions about the new realities of psychological war. A key theme was again the contention that the individual as such had become the ultimate target in psychological war; that 'man himself, his attitudes and sentiments, rather than arms and supplies, is the focal point for determining ultimate victory or defeat' (CNM 1941a, 63). Emphasis upon the individual again posed an *obligation to know* for the subject

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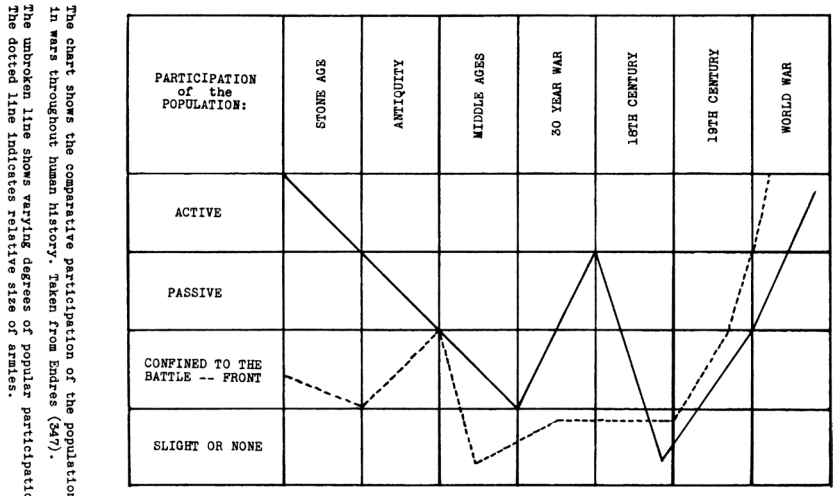

Figure 1.4 Excerpt from *German Psychological Warfare* (Committee for National Morale 1941a)

of psychological war: 'there is clearly a psychological campaign under way against us', the text concluded, and the first step to countering it was 'to understand the weak as well as the strong elements in our own strategy' (p. 86). In this political imagination the catechised individual stood as the model of a new kind of security underwritten by personal forms of political awareness, by an *obligation to know* about the war and one's place within it.

Emphasis upon the individual scale of psychological war was also placed through broader geographical imaginations of populations at war. Citing an entourage of German military theorists, the CNM wrote that 'Blau, Foertsch, Pintschovius, Soldan, Metzsch, Hentig and Bircher were all mindful that total war is no longer a struggle between armed forces, but between entire populations' (p. 62). As Figures 1.4 and 1.5 show, the CNM (p. 66) attempted to formalise psychological warfare's 'new geography of defense' as one 'conducted in the hinterland and on the military and home fronts'. Yet the geography of these figures remained notably abstract, suggesting only an alarming expansion of psychological warfare's spatial reach and the insistence that it had transcended the 'limits of space and time'.

The book's conclusion was a call to adapt German psychological warfare techniques to American ends. Citing a 1924 book titled *Military Intelligence* by Colonel (and by 1941 General) Walter Campbell Sweeney, the CNM argued that insight into war's psychological dimension had originally been an *American* discovery cribbed and twisted by Germany, and that the United States should

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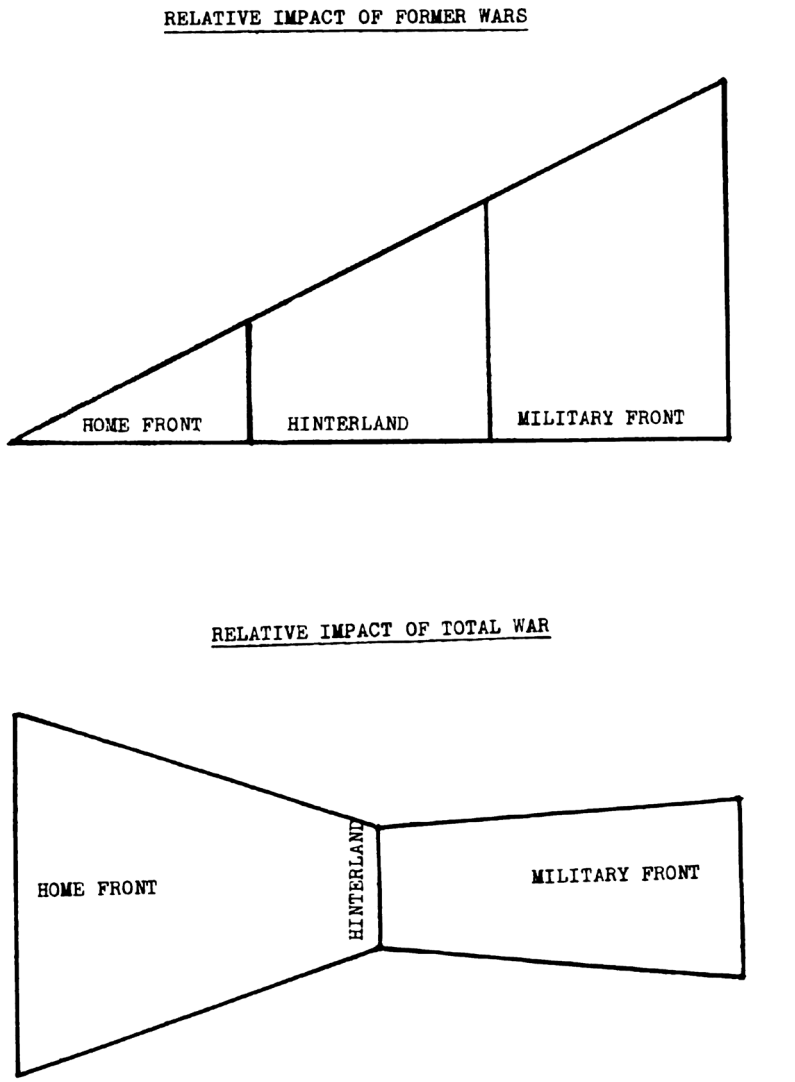

Figure 1.5 Excerpt from *German Psychological Warfare* (Committee for National Morale 1941a)

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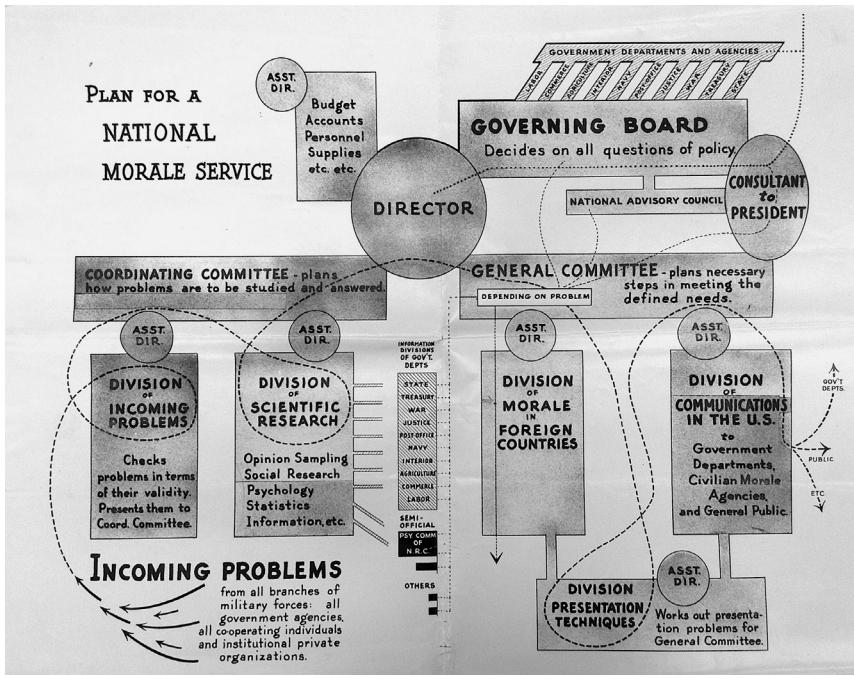

Figure 1.6 Plan for a national morale service (Committee for National Morale 1941b)

therefore not hesitate to engage in it. *German Psychological Warfare* finished with a passage from Sweeney's *Military Intelligence* that suggested the Committee's ambition to establish and operate a centralised American morale agency (Figure 1.6): 'a new method of attack has come into existence … and has brought us to the point where we must create a new agency and method of defense' (cited in CNM 1941a, 80). The CNM's construction of German psychological warfare therefore doubled as a wish list for its own designs: German psychological warfare was, it argued, fuelled by 'vast sums of money, full political power, and skillful co-ordination with military action' (CNM 1941, preface).

Ewald Banse and the psychological geography of war

Despite its emphasis on the scientific nature of German psychological warfare, the Committee for National Morale's exposé was, like its tabloid counterparts, abstract and untechnical. Though the psychologists of the CNM were eager to support the construction of psychological warfare, their ability to do so was limited by the fact that psychological war remained in large part a kind social science fiction in which,

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as Edmond Taylor (1940, 69) put it, Germany possessed 'scientific knowledge of the inner forces which determine opinion and control nerves'. For this reason, and perhaps ironically, *German Psychological Warfare* had little to say about the practice of psychological war *qua* psychology, drawing instead upon German geopolitical texts for its exposition. Karl Haushofer's *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* was particularly represented, and the committee listed German geographical research institutes as 'smokescreens for German imperialism' (CNM 1941a, 61).

Among those listed were the Working Community of Geopolitics in Munich, Heidelberg, and Berlin; the Institute of Political Geography at Krössinsee in present-day Poland; the Geographical Institute of Stuttgart; and the German Society of Geographical Research in Hanover. The institutes were identified as 'trouble seekers' seeking out '*Störungskerne*' (kernels of disturbance) in foreign nations, that is, the political and demographic cleavages upon which psychological warfare was said to depend. As much as psychological expertise, it was human and geographical intelligence that seemed to propel German psychological warfare 'beyond the limitations of time and space'. Based upon what it identified as Germany's study of 'comparative national psychology',[9] the CNM claimed that, according to Germany

> an exact and comprehensive knowledge of the people who inhabit neighbouring and enemy countries must be regarded as a pre-requisite of a successful foreign policy. The statesman as well as the soldier must know the peoples of foreign lands, their desires and aims, the strength of their faith and national pride, their characteristics, impulses and sensitivities, their domestic difficulties and cleavages. (CNM 1941a, 71)

In the context of total war, the CNM argued that erstwhile sources of national psychological intelligence such as travel writings and personal memoirs could no longer suffice. National psychological intelligence must now be 'pursued consciously in a planned and organized effort, utilizing all the means which objective research can place at our disposal' (p. 75), including geographical research and espionage. 'Geopoliticians, agents, and neutral informers are best qualified to supply the material required for such investigations', wrote the CNM, adding that 'no sensible government should neglect the employment of such observers'. The CNM quoted one such German geopolitician – the storied Ewald Banse – writing that 'the characterology of foreign nations is intended to be a complementary weapon of war' (p. 70) and that 'propaganda backed up by total intelligence is the most important weapon of psychological offensives' (p. 76).

[9] 'The search and appraisal of the psychological and sociological factors and phenomena of foreign nations' (CNM, 1941a, 71). Both Mead (1942) and Bateson (1942) wrote texts in the short-lived field of 'comparative national psychology'. Mead's book *And Keep Your Powder Dry* was used by the OWI to 'educate' European countries about the United States and its people, while Bateson's 'Morale and National Character' was published in the first major collection on 'civilian morale'.

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Though a relatively marginal figure in German geography, by 1941 Ewald Banse appeared in the American press as Germany's pre-eminent theorist of psychological warfare. Edmond Taylor's *New York Times* editorial quoted him directly, while the CNM (1941a, 90) identified him as 'Germany's foremost strategist of terror'. The claim was meant to further popular associations between German geopolitics and psychological warfare, with Banse serving as the latter's analogue to 'geopolitical mastermind' Karl Haushofer. *German Psychological Warfare* cited Banse extensively and reproduced the passage that would come to define him in the American press:

> applied psychology as a weapon of war means propaganda intended to influence the mental attitudes of nations toward war …, to undermine and break down its resistance, and to convince it that it is being deceived, misled and brought to destruction by its own government … The enemy nation's originally solid, powerful and well-knit fabric must be gradually disintegrated, broken down, rotted, so that it falls apart like a fungus treaded upon in a forest. (CNM 1941a, 67)

The passage was from Banse's 1932 *Raum und Volk im Weltkrieg* (Space and nation in world war), which along with his 1933 *Wehrwissenschaft* (Military science) constituted Banse's troubled foray into geopolitics. In a bizarre political drama, both texts were banned in Germany by the end of 1933, ironically not for opposing the Nazi Party but for the international controversy they provoked by advocating for German remilitarisation. The scandal revolved around the newly formed Nazi government's withdrawal from the League of Nations disarmament conference over the terms of the Versailles treaty in October 1933. The withdrawal had raised concerns in Allied countries over Germany's desire to remilitarise, and Banse's texts were especially decried in the Anglo-American press. Among others, *New York Herald Tribune* journalist Leland Stowe (1934) used his dispatches and polemic monograph *Nazi Germany Means War* to denounce Banse as the 'intellectual leader' of German rearmament.[10] Conceding to pressure, Germany banned publication of *Wehrwissenschaft*, and subsequently *Raum und Volk*, the latter of which *Times* of Britain editor Sir Wickham Steed (1933) identified as a 'much more formidable work' than the former.

Steed levelled especial criticism at a map published in *Raum und Volk* detailing a theoretical German invasion of Britain (Figure 1.7), ostensible evidence of Germany's territorial ambitions. His editorial served as the basis for continued pressure over *Raum und Volk* in the British and American press, leading to the ban and Germany's denunciation of the books as the 'senseless and irresponsible babblings of a private theorist'.[11] By 1934, unauthorised exposé-style English

[10] It was Stowe who in 1940 raised the most alarm concerning a Nazi fifth column in Norway and the United States; see above.

[11] 'Nazi ban on war book' *Times* (London), 4 November 1933. In the American press, see Birchall, Frederick, 'Reich is thinking of war despite its talk of peace', *New York Times,* 8 October 1933; 'Reich bans book advocating war', *New York Times*, 21 October 1933; 'Reich suppresses second Banse book', *New York Times*, 4 November 1933. In Britain, see 'Germany and peace', *Times* (London), 21 October 1933; Steed, Sir Wickham, 'War-teaching in Germany', *Times* (London), 27 October 1933.

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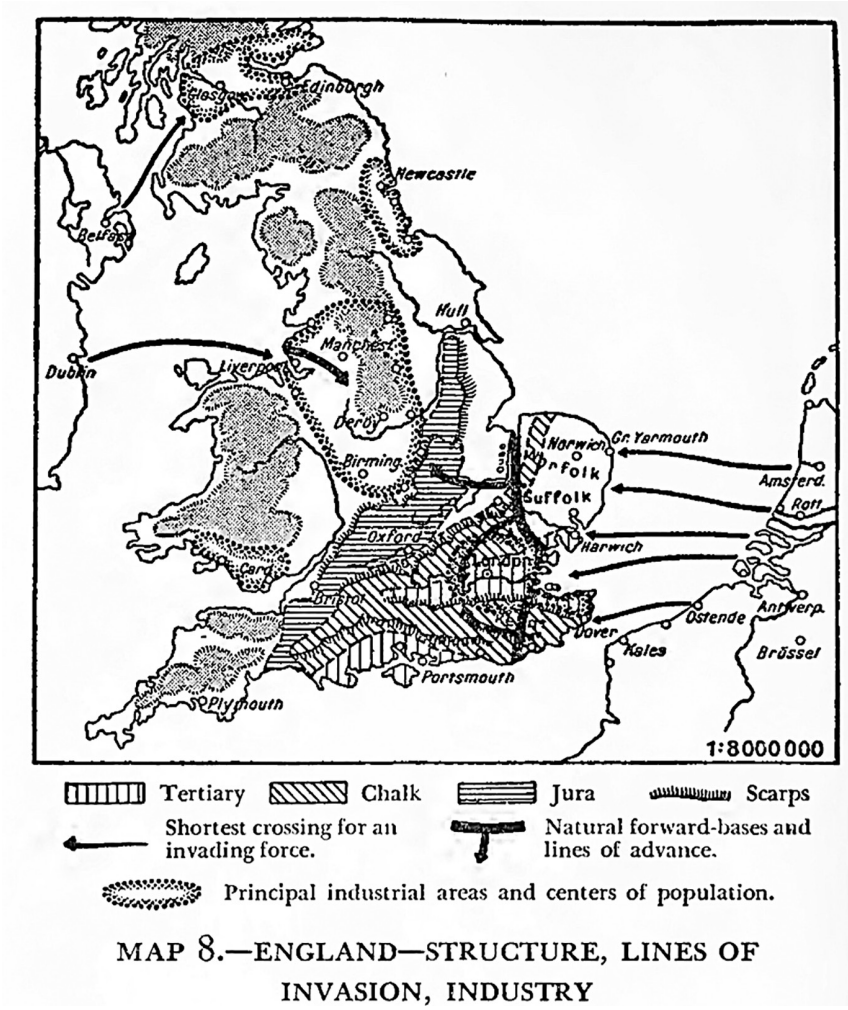

Figure 1.7 Banse's invasion map

translations of *Raum und Volk* were published in London and New York under the title *Germany Prepares for War*. English publishers (Harcourt 1934, iii) justified breaking the book's copyright for reasons they argued 'would be clear upon reading it'. Ironically, in the years leading up to the Second World War, *Raum und Volk* was banned in Germany but could be purchased in the United States, where it was claimed that Banse was a 'leading exponent of German military aims' (Harcourt Publishing 1934, iii). As Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 74) note, it remained the only text widely available in English from the new school of German geopolitics until the early 1940s.

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Tellingly, discussion of Banse as a 'mastermind' of propaganda or psychological warfare was entirely absent from this first controversy, appearing only in its 1941 revival. The first controversy revolved instead around British fears of coastal invasion, replaying what Heffernan (2000b) has called the 'hysterical geographies' of the early 20th century. In this first controversy, Banse's map served as a kind of non-fiction invasion literature for the British public. In 1941, however, the revived controversy was animated by fears not of littoral but of 'psychological' invasion. Perhaps fittingly, in Britain this controversy played out in the papers of press baron Lord Northcliffe. To the extent that *Raum und Volk* did address issues of propaganda, it was to decry what Banse called Northcliffe's 'war of lies' against Germany during the First World War. Even before the 1918 Armistice, one Hamburg-based journal attributed Germany's defeat to the 'long-advertised publicity offensive [of] that unprincipled, unscrupulous rascal Northcliffe' (Bruntz 1938b, 63). After the war, a 1924 issue of *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* made the incredible claim that Allied propagandists had 'taken over the leadership of the German people' (Bruntz 1938b, 63). It was a face-saving if fantastic claim: Germany had not suffered a military defeat but had been deceived by skilled and treacherous propagandists. Thus, as propaganda historian Philip Taylor (1980, 487) notes, when Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*, 'for propaganda reasons of his own, [he] was quite prepared to pay tribute to "the very real genius" of British war propaganda'.[12]

It was in this context that Banse wrote on 'applied psychology as a weapon of war'. Omitted in popular accounts, however, was that Banse (1932, 219) explicitly based this 'new weapon of war' on the British model. 'The English', wrote Banse, 'were the first people to adopt this new attitude':

> Henceforward war is no longer a crossing of swords with the enemy, as it used to be, but the military, economic, psychological and moral destruction of the enemy nation. It was England who instituted the war of starvation, the war of economic annihilation and the war of lies alongside of the war of armies – and scored a thumping success with them. One does not know whether to be horrified at the vileness, or to admire the clear-headed logic and unshakeable iron determination which this reveals; the latter attitude will probably carry a nation with its eye on its future further.

Though Banse did emphasise his belief in the importance of propaganda for British victory, he did not write on 'psychological warfare' per se. He wrote, rather, what he called *Seelengeographie des Krieges* – spiritual geographies of war – which only his English translators rendered as 'the psychological geography of war'. Far from the 'psychological laboratories' invoked in the American press, Banse

[12] Books such as Sir Campbell Stuart's (1921) *Secrets of Crewe House* helped create the legend of Lord Northcliffe's enemy propaganda department, a myth which Northcliffe himself was happy to further in the pages of *The Times* (Balfour 1979). Its central conceit, shared for different reasons in both Germany and Britain, was that Allied propaganda had caused a 'collapse of morale' in Germany.

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Figure 1.8 Ewald Banse. Portrait by Fritz Flebbe (1925)

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characterised his own work as 'aesthetic', 'expressionist', or 'spiritual' (*seelische*) geography: what Murphy (1992, 112) identifies as a mixture of 'popular anthropology, psychology and impressionistic description of landscape and topography'.

These self-styled 'expressionist' geographies were highly subjective – even lyrical – in seeking to 'elevate geography from a science to an art' (Groening 1993, 22). Banse's 1928 *Landschaft und Seele* (Landscape and soul), for example, asked if 'the means of science' sufficed to portray a region, or whether the 'weapons of art' were required to 'let a land come alive'. Banse claimed that it was for the geographer-artist to ruminate on a people and its landscape, 'not so much to describe causally, but to suggest instinctively' (cited in Murphy 1992, 119). He polemicised against the 'old geography' that he likened to an anatomist dissecting a cadaver. 'The new geography', he argued, 'works on the living body, it investigates not just the tissue, but also its activity and emotional life' (cited in Murphy 1992, 115).

Nor were Banse's spiritual geographies of war connected to the image of clinical psychology or 'secret laboratories' circulating in the American press. In practice, Banse's *Seelengeographien* were racially reductive re-litigations of the First World War. An inveterate Aryan supremacist, Banse argued, for example, that Austria-Hungary had not been Germanic enough, and that France's Nordic and Teutonic ancestries had accounted for its high 'fighting spirit'. Banse's *Seelengeographien* did therefore serve as racialised analogues to British, and later American, ideas of 'civilian morale', but they were decidedly unrooted in the kinds of 'laboratory psychology' suggested by American interventionists in the early 1940s.

Outside his two explicitly geopolitical texts, Banse was furthermore not regarded as a geopolitical thinker. He earns only passing mention in Geoffrey Parker's (1985) *Western Geopolitical Thought* and the German-language reviews of Rössler (1990) and Gerstenberger (1969). Hartshorne's (1939) *The Nature of Geography* criticised Banse's artistic methodology but was silent on his geopolitics, though an earlier article on political geography parenthetically noted that Banse's work had become a matter of 'some international concern' (Hartshorne 1935, 81). Nevertheless, Banse did have important supporters at the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik,* among them Erich Obst and Karl Haushofer, as well as Haushofer's mentor Erich von Drygalski. Though not an explicitly 'geopolitical' writer, Banse's work satisfied what Murphy (1992, 116) calls a 'geopolitical minimum' by holding geo-determinist theories of race in which landscape produced the 'spiritual climate' of a people.

While his work did not reflect the picture of psychological warfare as it was framed in the American press, the 'geopolitical minimum' of Banse's writing did have political uses *within* Germany. His race-centric 'expressionist geographies' were valued for their relative popularity and ability to reach quarters of German society that academic geography did not. The title of *Raum und Volk* was itself a play on another popular book, Hans Grimm's 1923 novel *Volk ohne Raum* (People

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without space), which had popularised the concept of *Lebensraum* to a non-academic audience through a telling of a German settler's struggle against British imperial competition in South Africa. Banse furthermore attempted to recuperate German racial superiority in the face of defeat in the First World War. Germany's racial impurity, Banse (1934, 108) contended, had allowed 'an alien hand' – British propaganda – to 'set in motion the dark forces of the un-German blood in us'. Conversely, he argued that Germany's best traits – its 'creative and truth-seeking character' – were decisive if noble weaknesses: 'a nation with its eyes so fixed on loyalty, truth and honesty easily falls into the enemy's traps … A straightforward nation imagines that it and its work do not need propaganda' (p. 113).[13] Ultimately, Banse's writings on the *Seelengeographie des Krieges* were less a programme for waging psychological warfare in foreign countries, and more an effort to shore up racial animus in Germany while raising alarms over *British* propaganda.

The narrative of Banse as a Haushoferian 'super scientist' was therefore doubly wrong. Not only was Banse uninterested in the kinds of 'laboratory psychology' invoked by Donovan's agents, but Banse's own influence in German geographical circles was tenuous, even before his censorship in 1933. Geographer Alfred Hettner was a vocal detractor, calling Banse an '*enfant terrible*' who imagined himself as 'geography's Schopenhauer' (Passi 2009, 21). Furthermore, Banse was not generally regarded as a geopolitical thinker, and before 1933 he had written nothing for Haushofer's influential *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*.[14] It remains a deep irony that Banse – champion of non-scientific 'aesthetic' geography, and the discipline's '*enfant terrible*' – was invoked in the United States to construct the menace of a scientifically rigorous programme of German psychological warfare.

American geographers and psychological war

> 'The map has become a psychological weapon'
>
> Hans Weigert

Critical geographers (Murphy 2014; Sloan 2017; Toal 1996) have identified the major American critiques of German geopolitics in 1942 as overt propaganda efforts, yet there has been less discussion of the way in which these texts

[13] This was a common meta-propagandistic claim. The Committee for National Morale's Kimball Young made a nearly identical claim about the United States, suggesting that Americans were averse to propaganda 'because we feel it is unnecessary or fear we may fall prey to totalitarianism ourselves by so doing' (CNM 1941a, 86).

[14] As Michel (2016) shows, German geography's 'self de-Nazification' after the war further contributed to Banse's contemporary obscurity, with Troll and Fischer (1949, 111) noting that Banse's 'direct homage to racial theory and militarism' had come into 'fairly sharp opposition to German geography' after the war.

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(Dorpalen 1942; Strausz-Hupé 1942; Weigert 1942; Whittlesey & Hartshorne 1942) contributed to the popular construction of psychological warfare. As Barnes (2006, 2008) and Barnes and Farish (2006) have shown, Richard Hartshorne's directorship of the Research & Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services had profound effects on both the war and the discipline of Geography. Before US entry into the war, however, as co-author of *The German Strategy of World Conquest* (1942, 28) with Derwent Whittlesey, Hartshorne contributed to interventionist narratives concerning Germany's purported geopolitical expertise, the geography of propaganda, and the 'contribution of psychology to practical statecraft'.

Funded by the Carnegie Corporation, Whittlesey and Hartshorne's book bore the stamp of the National Planning Association, which, suggestive of its broader footing, read that 'books are weapons in the war of ideas' (Sloan 2017, 137). Indeed, the book was, as Koelsch (2006, 146) notes, 'propaganda masquerading as objective scholarship', written in 1941 before the question of intervention was settled. On this account, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, xi) reproduced contemporary tropes of geopolitical alarmism, laying stress upon the technical sophistication of German geopolitics as a 'carefully devised scheme of world conquest, worked out with ruthless precision'. Like the Committee for National Morale, Whittlesey and Hartshorne identified geographical research as a lynchpin of German imperialism.[15] They wrote authoritatively on Karl Haushofer's supposed Munich Institute:

> The oldest of these organizations is the Institute of Geopolitics at the University of Munich. It is the outgrowth of Karl Haushofer's seminar and remains under his direction. Its research staff has more than eighty specialists trained in geography, political science, economics, demography, and perhaps other fields … Agents abroad, probably several hundreds of them, contribute to its store of facts about the non-German earth. (p. 108)

The German Strategy of World Conquest emphasised the traditional importance of geographical knowledge at war but also suggested the significance of geography to the constellation of ideas surrounding the emergent concept of psychological warfare. In addition to emphasising the imperative of collecting and disseminating geographical knowledge for military use – what would become Hartshorne's job as head of OSS Research & Analysis – the book also emphasised the decisive importance of geography as a tool of propaganda. Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 111, 116, 115) claimed that Germany had '[made] geography a political weapon' aimed

[15] The geopolitical organisations they list include the Association of Workers in Geopolitics; the German Peoples' Map Service ('discount maps to people'); the Institute for Politics in Berlin ('Albrecht Haushofer head of Geopolitical Seminar'); the Association of Germans Abroad; the National Bureau of Spatial Organization (the *Reichsbüro*); German-Iberian-American Institute; the Institute for Research on German National Groups of the South and Southeast; the Iranian Publicity House; and finally Haushofer's German Academy (p. 109).

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at 'bringing up German racial comrades, in whom the German soul burns as an inextinguishable fire'. Geographical *qua* political indoctrination occurred, they claimed, 'not only in youth education, but in higher education through the study of defense geography …, the sort of study outlined in the work of Banse'. Though they eschewed direct mention of 'psychological warfare', the invocation of Banse as propagandist would have been identifiable to contemporary readers as a reference to his role as 'Germany's foremost strategist of terror'.

Nor did Whittlesey and Hartshorne hesitate to connect German propaganda to German psychology, arguing that 'the contribution of psychology to practical statecraft' in Germany had been to 'awaken the German mass mind [to] a strong sense of the unique mission of Germany as a world leader' (p. 28). Claiming that a generation of Germans had been 'taught to read maps, not merely to look at them', Whittlesey and Hartshorne presented the 'German public mind' as one that had been 'trained to think in terms of space' (p. 29) This construction of popular geographical consciousness as a 'psychological' and political weapon was deeply consonant with contemporaneous accounts connecting German geopolitics to psychological war. By contrast, it also brought American isolationism into relief as a kind of 'space ignorance' that threatened national security. If popular geographical consciousness was a strength in psychological war, Whittlesey and Hartshorne advocated for the

> dissemination of all the facts needed to give every member of the body politic the best available understanding of the earth … A great deal can be done in the schools, where organized information may be presented and discussed objectively and systematically. Persons beyond school age can be kept in touch with new knowledge through the press and the radio. (p. 266)

In this political imaginary, mass mediation could disseminate a geographical consciousness that could at once educate, order, and secure populations. It was, moreover, a pastoral vision of populations secured through an obligation of individuals to know: 'a long-term program of learning about the earth in which *everybody will participate*' (p. 262, emphasis mine). It was a remarkable articulation of psychological warfare's moral economy – of the premise that every member of the body politic could be made secure through a programme of mass-mediated geographical consciousness. To cultivate for oneself a geographical consciousness was therefore to contribute, like the 'nerve privates' of Taylor's psychological war, to an emergent concept of national security tied to the knowledge, morale, and spiritual strength of the population.

In addition to framing geographical consciousness as a kind of psychological struggle, Whittlesey and Hartshorne stressed the territoriality of international propaganda. Drawing upon the recent innovation of short-wave radio's ability to broadcast signals across oceans, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 252) reproduced a map from Haushofer's *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* depicting 'the intensity of

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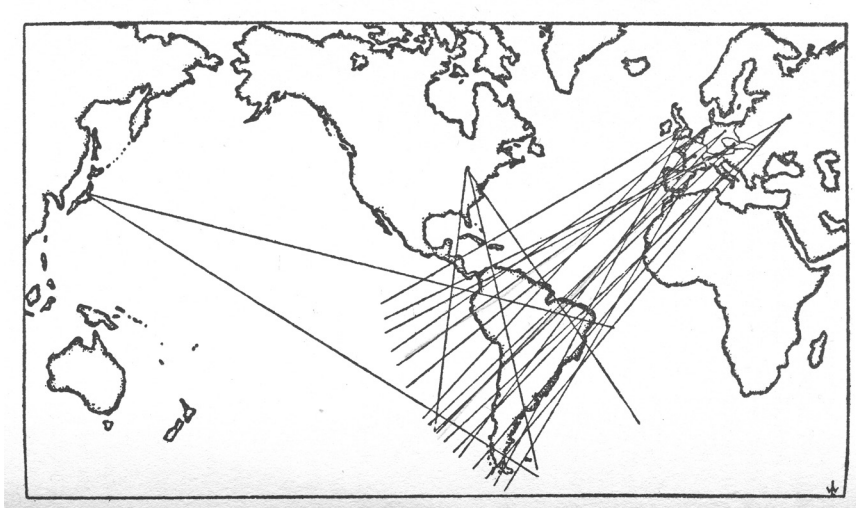

Figure 1.9 Radio Propaganda in South America. Excerpted from *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (Wellner 1938) in Whittlesey & Hartshorne (1942, 252)

propaganda that can be broadcast' to South America by the belligerent nations (Figure 1.9). Emphasis on South America dovetailed with contemporaneous fifth column alarmism, further articulating the logic of psychological warfare as a territorial contest over the minds of foreign populations. Narrating the map, Whittlesey and Hartshorne (1942, 262, 266) deployed a ballistic metaphor, claiming that 'European broadcasts bombard Latin American countries' and that 'all short-wave [radio] propaganda is intimately linked with German businesses in these countries'. Though they did not call it 'psychological war', Whittlesey and Hartshorne made clear that propaganda had created a new and decisive geography of defence.

Others were less taciturn. Perhaps the most candid treatment of geopolitics-as-propaganda appeared a year before the major geopolitical texts of 1942, and just several months after the publication of *German Psychological Warfare*. Geographer Hans Weigert's (1941, 528) short article 'Maps as Weapons' was driven by his 'astounding observation' that maps in the popular press were 'being taken as stable and indisputable factors', as 'mere tools which do not themselves reflect the aims and opinions of their creators'. Like Whittlesey and Hartshorne, Weigert argued that emerging American space consciousness had made maps into weapons of war on the new 'psychological' terrain. He wrote that

> naive confidence in the truthfulness of the map indicates that many of us are not aware … that maps are weapons … [T]he map has become a psychological weapon in a warring world where the souls of men are as strongly attacked as their lives. (Weigert 1941, 528)

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Contending that maps were a 'strong weapon in spiritual warfare', Weigert (1941, 529) insisted that 'the geopolitical map is characterized by its *psychological consequence* … not its material content but its propagandistic effect'. To 'meet this weapon and to use it ourselves', Weigert argued, 'the American public must learn how to read, how to digest a map'. For Weigert too, 'thinking geopolitically' involved a cultivation of self to match what Murphy (1992, 243) called the German drive to 'build character and promote the formation of will' (Murphy 1992, 243). It was another *obligation to know* for the subject of psychological war: to produce in oneself a 'space consciousness' for the defence of one's soul. In his 1942 monograph *Generals and Geographers*, Weigert (1942, 110) went on to 'discover' psychological warfare in the German geopolitical tradition, suggesting that 'Ratzel himself was not blind to [the] psychological factors that bring about a firm and stable symbiosis of the body politic and its spatial groundwork'. Karl Haushofer, too, he argued, 'knew perfectly well that the geopolitical strategist must also be an expert in psychological warfare'.

While the United States may have lagged, Weigert (1942, 251) assured readers that the task of constructing an American geopolitical consciousness was well underway. In the pages of *Life*, publisher Henry Luce may have demurred articulation of war aims 'in terms of vastly distant geography' (see Smith 2003, 18–20), but in the offices of *Fortune* magazine, his vice-president C. D. Jackson had begun what Weigert called the 'marvellous job' of teaching the United States 'its own geopolitics'. Jackson was another friend of William Donovan who would go on to hold top psychological warfare posts at the Office of War Information, and later in the Eisenhower administration (see Child & Barnes 2019). Between 1940 and 1941, however, Jackson used his position as vice-president of *Fortune* magazine to amplify Donovan's fifth column alarmism (October 1940) and provide Edmond Taylor with a ten-page platform on the imperative to 'take the offensive on the psychological front' (May 1941). However, it was the artistic maps of *Fortune* magazine's Richard Edes Harrison that most impressively illustrated Weigert's vision of a new American space consciousness (Barney 2012; Schulten 1998). To this end, as Crampton (2014) reveals, Harrison several times liaised directly with the OSS at the request of Arthur Robinson, head of the OSS Map Division. Harrison created striking and aesthetically engaging maps that illustrated American geopolitical interests around the globe, what Weigert (1942, 251) identified as archetypal 'suggestive maps' that could cultivate a new American geopolitical consciousness. Thus while the popular *Life* magazine sought to abstract and geographically deracinate American empire, middlebrow *Fortune* sought to construct a geopolitical imaginary for an American century (Smith 2003, xviii, 8) by depicting American interests in places such as Peru (1938), Chile (1938), Venezuela (1939), and Colombia (1940) (Figure 1.10).

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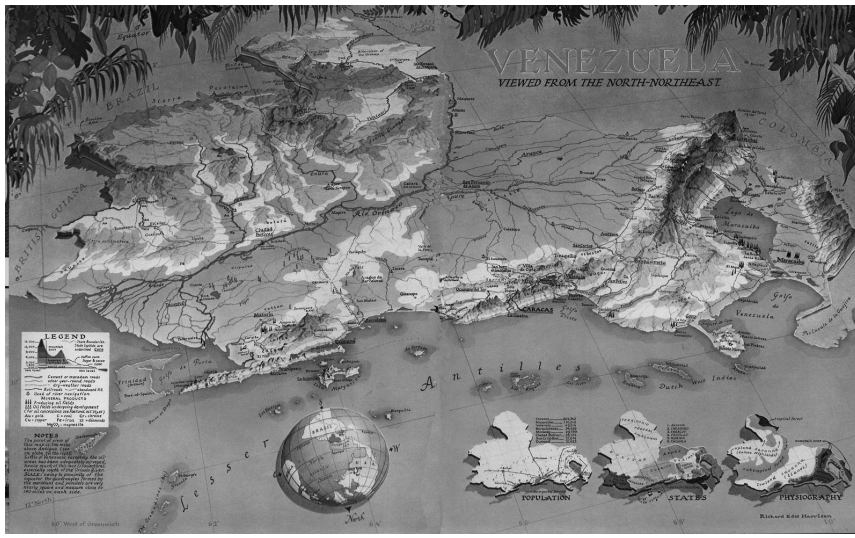

Figure 1.10 Geopolitical map of Venezuela, by A. Harrison (*c*. 1939)

While celebrating *Fortune* as a geopolitical educator, Weigert (1942, 251) insisted that 'it can be objectively stated that we have in the United States refrained from abusing and falsifying maps as weapons of propaganda'. It wasn't true. A year earlier, in the same month that Weigert published the shorter 'Maps as Weapons' (October 1941), a scandal had been manufactured around the discovery of a so-called secret map of South America that purported to detail German plans for partitioning the continent into vassal states. Though details remain unclear, the map is now widely understood to have been a forgery perpetrated by agents of the British Security Coordination, likely in concert with William Donovan and his Office of the Coordinator of Information (Bratzel & Rout 1985; Mahl 1998; Troy 1981, 83).

The map was meant to manufacture scandal over Germany's challenge to the United States' Monroe Doctrine prerogative in South America. Though it is unclear whether President Roosevelt knew the map to be a forgery or not, it nevertheless formed the centrepiece of his 27 October 1941 Navy Day address in which he decried Germany's imperial ambition.[16] 'I have in my possession',

[16] In a letter dated 23 October 1941 – four days before Roosevelt's speech – geographer James Preston, then working for Donovan's Office of the Coordinator of Information, discussed the analysis of intelligence on South America with James P. Baxter, head of the Office's Research & Analysis division. Preston confided to Baxter that 'much of this information which must be utilized by the CoI is too secret to be shared with other agencies'. It remains unclear what if any role American geographers had in forging the 'secret map' (United States National Archives and Records Administration, RG 263: Records of the Central Intelligence Agency. Entry A1 8: Background Papers for 'Donovan and the CIA: A History of the Establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency', Container 1).

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Roosevelt (1941b) addressed the nation, 'a secret map made in Germany by Hitler's government':

> It is a map of South America and a part of Central America, as Hitler proposes to reorganize it … The geographical experts of Berlin have ruthlessly obliterated all existing boundary lines; and have divided South America into five vassal states … That is his plan. It will never go into effect. This map makes clear the Nazi design not only against South America but against the United States itself.

The context of Navy Day was significant. As it was Roosevelt's policy to wage war without declaring it (Bratzel & Rout 1985), American warships had provoked controversy by engaging German U-Boats while escorting British ships across the Atlantic. The 'secret map' (Figure 1.11) was in this light a convenient foil for the Atlantic skirmishes, rooted in both popular accounts of Germany's sinister geopolitical expertise and in the Monroe Doctrine prerogative of 'hemispheric defense'. Like Figure 1.2, the forged map depicted a planned German *Luftverkehrsnetz* (air traffic network), illustrating Roosevelt's prior warning that South America could serve as a base for German air attacks on the United States.

Citing the 'violent reactions' of German propagandists to Roosevelt's speech, CNM member Leonard Cronkhite (1941) made the curious argument in a *New York Times* editorial that the discovery of the secret map had been a *propaganda* victory for Roosevelt and the interventionists. 'To Nazi propagandists', wrote Cronkhite, 'the infuriating and unforgivable thing is that the President resorted to that superlatively potent thing, the truth. In so doing', he continued, Roosevelt 'touched the main problem in American propaganda – namely, how to make truth more powerful than the momentary counterfeiting of truth'. It was an ironic claim given the forgery; however, it supported the geopolitical imagination of Germany's 'strategy of world conquest', as well as the strange premise that 'the power of truth' could combat it.

Though the map itself had nothing to do with 'psychological war' per se, Cronkhite cited it as evidence of the need for psychological 'hemispheric defense' through the establishment of an American 'psychological strategy board'. Indicative of the extent to which geopolitical and psychological war alarmism had combined, Cronkhite quoted Banse to remind readers that 'the coming war will ultimately be fought out in the souls of the belligerent nations'. Significantly, Cronkhite's identification of the map as a reflection of the 'power of truth' against German psychological warfare presaged the so-called strategy of truth which would soon and lastingly come to define the political rhetoric of the United States' own psychological warfare institutions. In the meantime, the secret map affair sustained interventionist rhetoric in the weeks before the Pearl Harbor attack, on the eve of which Nelson Rockefeller announced that psychological warfare had created 'a new geography of defense'. It was the culmination of a two-year effort by British and American intelligence agencies to construct the idea of a psychological war, to manufacture and uncover evidence of it, and to wage one of their own.

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Figure 1.11 Roosevelt's secret map (FDR Library 1941)

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Anti-geopolitics and the strategy of truth

Three days before his 'secret map' speech on 27 October 1941, President Roosevelt issued an Executive Order creating the Office of Facts and Figures (OFF), a predecessor to the Office of War Information that would be established less than a year later. Roosevelt appointed US poet and Librarian of Congress Archibald McLeish as head of the OFF 'for the purpose of facilitating the dissemination of factual information to the citizens of the country' without so-called ballyhoo methods (Roosevelt 1941a). McLeish was a committed interventionist and New Dealer who called fascism 'capitalism's revenge upon itself' and a 'revolution of the defeated … of the dispossessed' (cited in Winkler 1978, 11). McLeish was, however, a reformer, not a revolutionary. In French literary circles during the 1920s, he clashed with Marxists, who in his estimation had subordinated art to politics. The conviction did not prevent him, however, from serving as editor of *Fortune* magazine from 1930–8, where he worked alongside C. D. Jackson, who soon became the country's top psychological warrior in the European theatre (Winkler 1978, p. 10).

The establishment of the OFF was met with some incredulity in the press. As the *New York Herald Tribune* sardonically put it, the

> OFF is just going to superimpose its own 'well organized facts' upon the splendid confusion, interpret the interpreters, re-digest those who now digest the digesters, explain what those who explain what the explainers of the explanations means, and coordinate the coordinators of those appointed to coordinate the coordinations of the coordinated. (cited in Koppes & Black 1990, 56)

For interventionists such as the *New York Times*'s James Reston, however, the OFF did not go far enough in matching the centralisation, authority, and funding of the apparent German psychological warfare machine. In a pseudo-exposé of the American 'defense information services', Reston (1941) calculated that the United States spent over $10 million annually between seven agencies.[17] Emphasising clerical and administrative redundancies, Reston framed the debate as between those pushing for a centralised and streamlined service and those who believed that 'such a system would lead to censorship at the source and thus infringe the freedom of the press'. In subsequent columns, however, this latter concern receded, and when the OWI succeeded the OFF to become such an agency in 1942, Reston took a sabbatical from the paper of record to head its influential London office. In the meantime, Reston lauded Roosevelt for 'attempting to steer a middle course', outlining for readers the emergent geography of the United States' own entry into the psychological fray with

[17] The Departments of State, War, the Navy, the Treasury, the Office of Emergency Management, and the two newcomers: the Office of Facts and Figures, and the Office of the Coordinator of Information.

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> Colonel Donovan running the broadcasting and psychological warfare everywhere except in the Western Hemisphere; with Nelson Rockefeller directing the widespread dissemination of news and only news in Latin America; and with Mr. MacLeish correlating the defense information that is put out by the main defense agencies at home.

Reston's schema foreshadowed what would become the standard geographical taxonomy already identified by Harold Lasswell, however mockingly, in the 1920s: propaganda (now 'psychological war') in enemy countries, 'news and only news' in neutral ones, and pure 'information' at home.

As head of the OFF, McLeish lobbied press organisations to toe official lines concerning the continued need for psychological defence and the securitisation of the American population *qua* civilian morale. Addressing the American Society of Newspaper Editors in April 1942, McLeish appeared to acknowledge the fantastic proportions of psychological war alarmism, admitting that 'fraud as an instrument of conquest is something we have read about but have not seen' and that 'the power of words to overthrow nations and enslave their people is a power which we do not altogether or literally believe' (*New York Times*, 21 April 1942). Whether or not McLeish or his audience did altogether or literally believe in the power of German psychological war, he nonetheless urged the gathered editors to 'police the minority of its own members who are engaged in defeatist propaganda' (*New York Times*, 21 April 1942).

Many did. In March 1942, for example, the *New York Times* profiled a planned OFF pamphlet called *Divide and Conquer*. The pamphlet condensed the themes of the previous two years' fifth column and psychological war alarms, citing its central texts: Edmond Taylor's *The Strategy of Terror*, Donovan and Mowrer's *Fifth Column Lessons*, Herman Rauschning's fabricated *Voices of Destruction [Conversations with Hitler]*, and Leland Stowe's *No Other Road to Freedom*. The pamphlet was a testament to the role played by these texts in constructing and sustaining the concept of psychological war. Reiterating them, *Divide and Conquer* dramatised German victories in Europe and insisted that psychological warfare had secured them. 'The United States is still intact', the *New York Times* profile read, 'but Hitler hopes to destroy that unity, physically and mentally. All his tricks are now being directed against us. Our job today is one of *individual awareness*, in order to avoid falling into the Hitler trap' (29 March 1942, emphasis mine) (Figure 1.12).

The 'job of individual awareness' appeared as another *obligation to know* for the subject of psychological war, connecting it to the emergent rhetoric of an American 'strategy of truth'. Responding to the 'lie' that British naval circles were encouraged by the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the OFF (1942, 3) pamphlet's opening paragraph argued that

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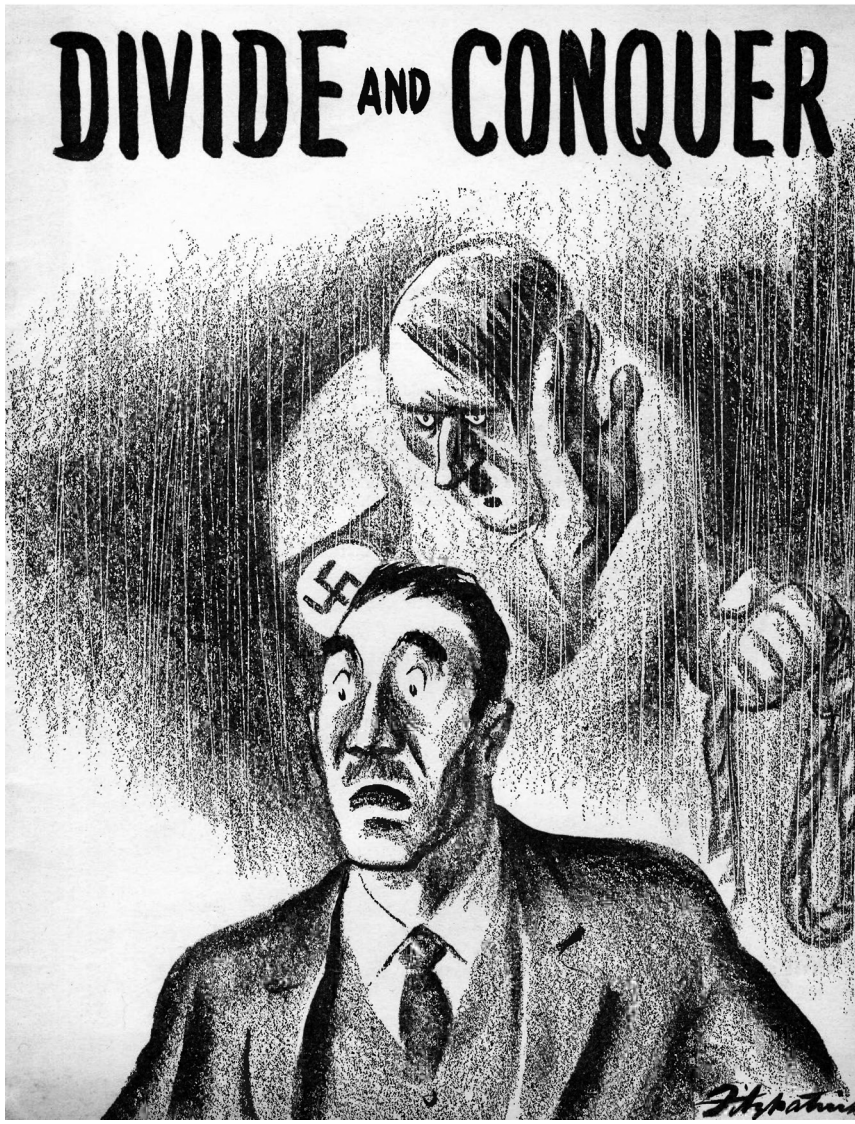

Figure 1.12 Cover of OFF (1942) pamphlet *Divide & Conquer*

this Nazi lie, like all Nazi lies, was part of a vast strategy of terror. Hitler knows that in order to conquer the world he must first enslave the mind of man, and toward that end he is carrying out a program of propaganda, blackmail, and death. Because he fears truth, he has tried every means of wiping it off the face of the earth.

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The passage evoked a geopolitical imagination of psychological war as a territorial contest of truth against lie, a battle in which Germany 'feared truth' and attempted to 'wipe it off the face of the earth'. In this and subsequent constructions, 'truth' appears as a talisman against the 'lies' and 'terror' of enemy states. Invoking John 8:32's gospel that 'the truth shall set you free', the pamphlet concluded that

> we know that Hitler, who acts like a terror, is really the most frightened man on earth. The upraised arm, the shouting voice, the mighty bluster, all mask a mortal dread of the weapon that makes men free: the truth. We are armed with the truth, and we will crush the tyrant. (OFF 1942, 14)

With the 'strategy of truth' the OFF articulated a territorial vision of American psychological war, tying together an individualised *obligation to know* ('our job today is one of *individual awareness*') and a biopolitical imaginary of population security ('national morale'). As the CNM's Leonard Cronkhite argued in the *New York Times*, it was imperative that this talismanic truth supersede drab fact. 'To merely inform is insufficient', Cronkhite (1941) wrote:

> To inform at the right time, with the right emphasis, on the sufficient scale, with the particular truth that counters the blasts of the enemy thought-machine – these problems need to be met by an over-all strategy … The research necessary, the knowledge essential, and the application of counter-action, requires detachment, scientific independence and freedom of movement. Much of the research preparation has been undertaken under private and educational auspices. Much of the basic work cannot possibly be done by any existing department. Great potentials remain unused to affect here and elsewhere the result in this mortal conflict.

It was an impressive condensation of psychological warfare's moral economy: a picture of its objectivity ('scientific independence'), its muscularity ('blasts' and 'counter actions'), and its moral commitment to truth. The call for a psychological 'grand strategy' moreover suggested an implicit territoriality, framing the places of the world – 'here and elsewhere' – as the battlespaces of a new kind of war between truth and terror (Figure 1.13). The construction of American psychological war can therefore be understood to have created a geopolitical imaginary in which the advance of truth imposed *order* upon the places and people of a world at war.

While this and other accounts suggest the presumed global scale of the new psychological war, they betray what Neil Smith (2003, 20) calls the 'rhetorical spacelessness' of American empire. Against the foil of 'German terror', the construction of 'truth as a weapon' served as a geographically deracinated signifier of American empire. As Smith notes, when Henry Luce demurred the articulation of American war aims 'in terms of vastly distant geography', he sought to couch his 'American century' in aspatial rhetorical terms such as 'freedom' and 'democracy', eschewing territorial or economic frames such as empire or capitalism. The 'strategy of truth' did not suggest, for example, the maintenance of press

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Figure 1.13 The Axis Grand Strategy (*New York Times*, 27 March 1942)

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blacklists in South America, or the negotiation of access to foreign film markets. Thus, when Cronkhite advocated a centralised psychological strategy board whose 'power would reside in timed and emphasized truth', he invoked only an abstract and deterritorialised idea of truth. Mirroring German psychological warfare as an omnipresent threat that 'knew no bounds in space and time', the American strategy of truth would be both everywhere and nowhere.[18]

It was not, however, until the establishment of the Office of War Information in June 1942 that the 'strategy of truth' became the official policy of American psychological war. The OWI consolidated the existing offices of Facts and Figures, Government Reports, and the Foreign Information Service, the latter of which had previously been under the control of Donovan's Office of the Coordinator of Information (Weinberg 1968; Winkler 1978). The OWI's first director, CBS radio journalist Elmer Davis, was drawn from the ranks of the CNM. Like McLeish, Davis was a New Deal liberal who had been a member of the American Labor Party 'until communist elements gained the upper hand' (Winkler 1978, 31). The selection of Davis was in part a response to criticism of the propagandistic tones of McLeish's OFF. 'Elmer Davis', wrote journalist Arthur Krock (1942) in the days prior to the OWI's establishment, 'continued today to stress news as the product expected of him by the public and the press … That is where the accent belongs and where it has NOT been placed by the OFF.' Krock went so far as to accuse McLeish's office of resorting to 'psychological' measures against the American public, a rare break from the term's normative assignment to enemy efforts:

> They [the OFF] have functioned more as the people's psychiatrists than as reporters, and there have been instances when they have glossed over or twisted facts in the apparent belief that national 'morale' would be better served by so doing … Many have expressed confidence that no releases over which Mr. Davis and OWI have control will contain or reflect any of these flaws, that they will be honest contributions to the news and not to 'psychological' warfare or mass treatment in the fields of national morale and partisan politics.

While the emphasis on *news* was meant to stress the OWI's objectivity, in practice its proselytising tones remained. In a speech titled 'The Power of Truth', given at a dedication ceremony for a new General Electric short-wave radio transmitter in September 1942, Robert Sherwood argued that 'we have one form of strength which our enemies do not possess – and that is the power of truth'. He continued:

[18] The rhetoric of the 'strategy of truth' helped suspend extant contradictions between American imperialism and popular isolationism, providing an abstract liberal gloss to actually existing American colonial administration. Indeed, what appeared in American constructions as 'German psychological warfare's' drive to collect data on foreign populations in fact reflected the United States' own innovations in colonial policing at the turn of the 20th century (see McCoy 2009).

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> The Nazi masters of Europe – the Japanese masters of East Asia – make it a capital offense for anyone to listen to the truth. They fear the truth, because it is the weapon of destruction for them who have thrived on lies. To all victims of oppression who may hear us … we Americans express the substance of our democratic faith – that the truth is mighty and shall prevail – the truth shall set you free.

The speech reflected Roosevelt's (1942) claim in establishing the OWI that the office would fulfil a supposed global 'right to truth' – 'the *right* of the American people and of *all other peoples* opposing the Axis aggressors to be truthfully informed about the common war effort'. The suggestion that the General Electric short-wave transmitter – an embodiment of American psychological warfare as a joint project between capital and the state – could secure a global 'right to truth' presaged the expansionary and market-driven doctrine of the 'free flow of information' that would emerge in the Cold War (Nordenstreng 2011; Peters 2004; Schiller 1976). Arthur Edes Harrison's map 'On Assignment' (Figure 1.14) similarly depicted the American news industry's promotion of itself as a global guarantor of truth. Luce's *Time–Life–Fortune* empire was therefore not only a projection of American economic *Lebensraum* (Smith 2003), but also a custodian of national morale on which the psychological defence of nations was presumed to rest.

The institutionalisation of American psychological warfare as a 'strategy of truth' in 1942 was therefore made possible through concerted efforts by the early American intelligence community to dramatise the threat of German psychological warfare as a 'strategy of terror'. While German psychological warfare was presented as a deeply territorial project connected to geopolitical strategy and expansionary ambition, the American 'strategy of truth' was conversely framed as an anti-geopolitics, contributing to the durable if contradictory 'rhetorical spacelessness' of American empire (Smith 2003, 20). In theatres of combat, American psychological warfare would soon become a matter of brutal territorial assertion; however, on the American home front, its imagination as a 'strategy of truth' served to obfuscate the coming violence – a cynical if enduring feature of American psychological warfare in the years and decades to come.

Conclusion

Thus did American psychological warfare give itself a strange birth. While William Donovan and his network of interventionists sought to leverage the authority of psychologists to construct the menace, it remained a social science fiction animated by fears of invasion on the 'inner front'. Underwritten by the phantasmal threat of a German fifth column, Donovan's network constructed

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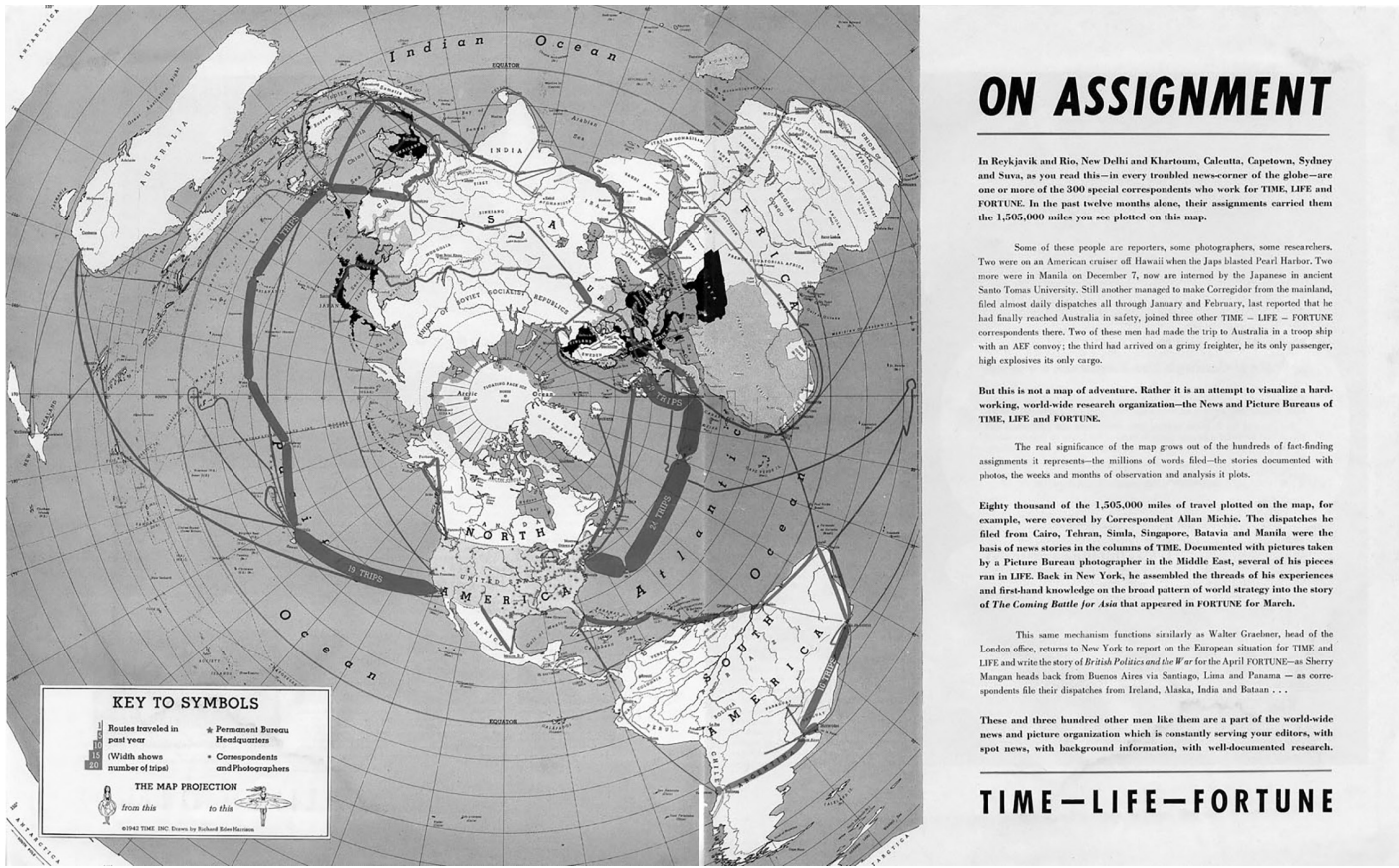

Figure 1.14 Arthur Edes Harrison's (1942) 'On Assignment'

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a new geographical imagination of war in which individualised 'obligations to know' scaled into a concept of 'national morale' at the level of population. This new geography pointedly obviated the possibility of American isolationism since psychological war 'knew no bounds in time and space'. The concept of psychological warfare was therefore posed to the American public as a rhetorical exercise demonstrating the intractability of total war, and the impossibility of isolation.

Central to the exercise was an effort to construct a picture of Ewald Banse in the American press as the 'mastermind' of German psychological warfare. Though a marginal figure in Germany, the Banse narrative drew upon and furthered contemporaneous constructions of Karl Haushofer as the geopolitical mastermind driving a new and scientific method for waging war. American geographers, notably those within the remit of Donovan's Office of the Coordinator of Information, also lent their authority to psychological and geopolitical narratives, tying them together into a new geographical imagination of invasion and national defence.

Despite Germany's ability to reach the American public through new communication technologies such as short-wave radio, it had not succeeded in establishing real lines of communication to the American public. However, even in the absence of a real threat, the construction of psychological war allowed American political leaders to consolidate power over their own domestic lines of communication, first through the establishment of the Office of Facts and Figures, and later through the Office of War Information. The conceit of meeting Germany's strategy of terror with an American 'strategy of truth' was reflected in an ostensible rejection of vulgar geopolitics, and an assertion of a geographically deracinated vision of American foreign policy based on the idealised concepts of freedom, democracy, and truth. In so doing, the United States embarked upon a project of proselytising the peoples of the world with truths it would soon obligate them to know. The following chapters trace the often violent fits and starts of this project to 'tell America's story to the world'.

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2

Truth, Territory, Terror

With entry into the Second World War came the creation of the United States' own psychological warfare agencies in the form of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Office of War Information (OWI), with the former engaging in covert 'black' operations and the latter producing overt and attributable 'white' propaganda (Winkler 1978). While the covert nature of OSS psychological warfare shrouds its operations in secrecy, the OWI's overt 'strategy of truth' affords a closer look at the United States' early psychological warfare efforts. This chapter therefore considers the significance of the US Office of War Information in terms of three analytic foci: the politics of truth underwriting the United States' initial forays into psychological war; the politics of territoriality obscured by the rhetorical frame of the 'strategy of truth'; and the politics of terror tying psychological warfare to formative practices of aerial bombardment.

Through a discussion of truth, territory, and terror, this chapter considers how US entry into the Second World War established a repertoire of psychological warfare practices that often contradicted the idealism of its professed strategy of truth. I show how, despite its anti-geopolitical rhetoric, the so-called strategy of truth became an important lever of territorial government in the theatres of Europe and North Africa. While little evidence exists to suggest that psychological warfare had appreciable effects on enemy troops, I show that behind advancing Allied lines, US psychological war was tightly tied to expanding markets for the circulation of American cultural commodities and their corollary depictions of the American lifestyle. Finally, I show that, absent access to populations through the circulation of information and cultural commodities, US psychological warfare was tightly integrated into US strategic bombing efforts, not only as a way to make the violence of bombing socially legible to those it targeted, but also to provide it with moral and social scientistic justifications.

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Psychological war and the politics of truth

In this section I consider the public discussions that took place in the United States over the politics of truth as they concerned the new concept of psychological warfare. I argue that American psychological warfare's claim to a 'strategy of truth' was the most important tenet of its moral economy, given public resentment and distrust over propaganda. As suggested in the previous chapter, while psychologists may not have contributed greatly to 'psychological war' efforts in the months prior to American entry into the war, they did work tirelessly to create public awareness of the apparent German threat and to articulate a theory of 'national morale' as a response to it. In this section I outline the political contours of this discussion to show how psychologists constructed a liberal political imaginary of democratic morale as an attempt to square the circle of public apprehension over propaganda.

The cynicism of the deadly parallel

In an undated (*c*. 1941) memorandum titled 'A Means of Recommending the Morale Service to the Public', the Committee for National Morale (CNM) understood the problem facing it in the following terms:

> It is very difficult to set up a [national morale] service of this sort in peace time without arousing widespread opposition from the public. Propaganda bureaus, Censorship bureaus, Ministries of Information, etc. all carry the stigma that they are imposed from the top, are dictatorial and undemocratic. Yet if the findings of the Morale Service are to be put into effect, the Morale Service will have to exercise some of the functions associated with these unpopular institutions. It is therefore vitally important to set up the Morale Service in a way which will differentiate it in the public mind from these unpopular institutions and which will make the Public feel that the Service is friendly to them. (CNM n.d.)

As Committee member Gordon Allport (1941a, 89) saw it, a central obstacle to the establishment of a national morale service was what he called 'the cynicism of the deadly parallel', that is, the tendency of the American public to approach with scepticism not only enemy information programmes but also those of the US government. 'Smarting with humiliation', observed Allport, 'young people have been taught to distrust the toxins of propaganda, the hypocrisies of Versailles, and the mischief of war hysteria … It is an irony of fate that those slogans most appropriate to the present need were used in 1917–18 and cannot possibly be employed again.'[1] For Allport, indiscriminate scepticism may have been as bad as its opposite. The

[1] The Depression made things worse. 'I suppose', Allport recounted one reliefer to have said, 'they'll be asking us now to make the world safe for unemployment'.

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problem thus became how to overcome the 'cynicism of the deadly parallel' to foster discriminating credulity towards official US morale efforts.[2]

To square the circle, CNM members contrived to produce 'democratic morale' as a new concept that could secure the morale of the body politic while keeping intact each individual's critical autonomy. For Allport (1941a, 91), a political imagination of *health* grounded the CNM's vision for democratic morale:

> it is difficult to define the positive ingredients of morale for the same reason that it is difficult to specify the ingredients of sanity, health, and well-being. Painful conditions and mental conflicts have a way of becoming focal in consciousness. They stand out as etched figures on a ground of marginal awareness; while good morale, like health, is a ground condition, embedded in the matrix of personality.

Against the vision of the healthy 'integrated personality' for whom good morale appears as a baseline condition, Allport (1941a, 91) posed the 'segmented personality' of the totalitarian regime. A condition of obedience won through coercion, intimidation, and above all emotional appeals, the 'segmented personality' found its archetypal expression in the Nazi citizen, who, as Allport wrote,

> identifies himself with his leader, yields up his own responsibility, his own conscience, and a large portion of his intelligence. An almost trance-like state results which must be sustained by the trappings, the myths, and the hocus-pocus appropriate to hypnotism. In the exercise of democratic morale [by contrast], all of one's sentiments, values, and knowledge can be employed.

In suggesting the 'hocus-pocus hypnotism' of Nazi morale, Allport again invoked fear of a quasi-magical, talismanic German psychological warfare that also doubled as a foil for his vision of democratic morale as the condition of a 'realistic and problem-solving integrated personality'. Democratic morale, he wrote, did not need 'incessant stimulants', and it 'carries along doggedly, as do healthy individuals in their daily lives when faced with serious tasks'. Democratic morale was, in other words, precisely what was needed to overcome the cynicism of the deadly parallel: a vision of national morale imposed not 'from the top' but from *below*; a vision of national security rooted in a liberal imagination of rationality, individual autonomy and personal volition.

Gordon Allport's brother Floyd Henry Allport (1941, 258), another influential social psychologist and early theorist of national morale, made a similar pronouncement, arguing that morale consistent with 'democratic principles' should 'spring up (energies enlisted) by virtue of clear statements and universal acceptance of the end-event (carry-through purpose)'. Though more vernacular,

[2] It might have been Monty's Python's Graham Chapman (1969) speaking on 'joke warfare': 'All through the winter of '43 we had translators working, in joke-proof conditions, to try and produce a German version of the joke. They worked on one word each for greater safety. One of them saw two words of the joke and spent several weeks in hospital. But apart from that things went pretty quickly, and we soon had the joke by January, in a form which our troops couldn't understand but which the Germans could.'

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Floyd Allport's sentiment was the same as his brother's: democratic morale should appear as a kind of liberal self-government based on 'universality, respect for the individual, and voluntary, wholehearted participation' (Allport 1942, 8). Together the brothers worked to present a vision of democratic morale that distanced itself from emotional appeals and the negative association with propaganda. Democratic morale, they argued, could square the circle of the deadly parallel by '[utilising] the full intellectual equipment of each individual, so that his morale may involve the whole man' (Allport 1942, 14). 'Oddly enough' Gordon Allport concluded (1941a, 92), 'democratic morale is more total than totalitarian morale.'

When did critique run out of steam?

Though the CNM failed to materialise its envisioned morale service, its members populated the Office of War Information and the Office of Strategic Services when those organisations were founded in the summer of 1942. While the covert nature of OSS operations shielded it from public scrutiny, the rhetorical thrust of the OWI's overt 'strategy of truth' provided a venue for the cultivation of 'democratic morale'. Promotion of the OWI 'strategy of truth' thus became a foundation of Allport's writing and advocacy in this period. Central to this work was the construction of a vision of truth abstracted from the vulgarities and influence of political power. Allport (1942, 15) attacked Nietzsche's 'unacceptable assertion' that 'the criterion of truth lies in the enhancement of the feeling of power'. 'Such irrationalism', he claimed, 'is not the foundation for a democratic morale, and programs of action cannot be based upon it.'

In the second yearbook of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), fittingly on *Civilian Morale*, Allport (1942, 5–6) took aim at conservative opponents who believed that the ideal of democratic morale was 'intolerable sentimentalism' and a 'futile gesture of sweetness in the face of grisly reality'. In a 'life and death struggle', these interlocutors held, 'the bestial and least democratic of tactics is likely to win'. Against the apparent strategy of truth, conservatives such as the University of Chicago's Sherman Dryer argued for the expedient use of 'relevant duplicity' in times of war. His 1942 book *Radio in Wartime* prefigured the 'noble lie' more associated with the University of Chicago after Leo Strauss's arrival there in 1949. Dryer (1942, 36–7) offered scepticism of psychological war alarmism, sarcastically writing that

> radio is a secret weapon. The secret is how to use it as a weapon. We still have not discovered that secret, nor has any other country. For all the ballyhoo about the power of radio on the psychological front, there is virtually no evidence to substantiate the claims that the microphone is as effective or important a weapon as a bombing plane or a panzer division.

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In so writing, Dryer (1942, 38) took aim at the contrivances of writers such as Edgar Mowrer, Leland Stowe, Edmond Taylor, and other

> reporters washed back to our shores by the wave of war in Europe who have told us that 'Hitler broke French courage with his broadcasts', that 'Radio Berlin softened up the resistance of Europe', and that the battle of words raging between European belligerents is 'cracking enemy morale'.

Dryer also rejected the liberal lionisation of 'straight news' as a bearer of democratic morale, noting that *Deutsche Rundfunk*'s much decried efforts to 'sow confusion and apprehension among enemy populations' almost exclusively appeared in the guise of 'straight news'. Though Dryer was keen for short-wave radio to be used against Germany, it was on the home front that Dryer saw radio's greatest potential. 'Instead of expending great effort on shortwave broadcasts to the enemy', argued Dryer,

> it would be vastly more profitable to concentrate on the home front. Broadcasts to the enemy have a negative purpose to bewilder, to confuse, and to frighten. On the home front, however, the great creative potential of radio may be used to inspire, influence, and emotionalize public response. Creative radio can exploit 'plus symbols' to significant advantage. The audience of entertainment and dramatic programs is ready-made, receptive to interpretation and directives. We know our own people better than we can ever know our enemy. We can communicate with the home front on the standard waveband, and exploit listeners' loyalties to radio and to specific programs. (p. 40)

In contrast to those who claimed that psychological warfare 'knew no limits in space' (Taylor 1940, 4), Dryer stressed the significance of its geography, of the line of communication: it was on the home front that propaganda had its real chances for success.

For Dryer (1942, 83), the so-called strategy of truth reflected among its advocates a 'fearfulness that they will be called propagandists'. While he admitted that 'man's ability to reason, properly exploited, is the technician's ally', it was ultimately in emotional rather than intellectual appeal that Dryer located the 'control box of mass action'. Unlike the early strategists of truth, Dryer saw the intellectual approach as an avenue for, not an alternative to, propaganda. He argued that what the United States needed was not a strategy *of* truth, but a strategy *for* truth:

> In the execution of this task [the propagandist] can respect no single fact, no truth, so much that he will refuse to alter it, if it does not fit into the total emotional pattern he is designing. This is less Machiavellian than practical. It is probably the only tactic that will make effective a strategy of democratic propaganda. (p. 87)

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More than practical arguments, Dryer levelled a metaphysical critique against the strategy of truth and its premise that propaganda and information could be neatly delineated. 'We live in a propaganda age', Dryer argued, and since propaganda is 'a method utilized for influencing the conduct of others on behalf of predetermined ends, … every articulate person with a purpose is a propagandist' (p. 88). In directing attention towards *content*, Dryer shifted the terms of appraising propaganda away from the material basis of its organisation, production, and circulation in favour of the more intractable abstractions of objectivity, neutrality, and influence. Because *all* information had the potential to influence, he argued, the ideal of an objective or unbiased information agency was from an epistemological perspective impossible. Everything, it followed, was permitted.

Though rarely voiced, the duplicitous 'strategy *for* truth' ironically allowed for recapitulations of the strategy of truth in the popular press. Commenting on *Radio in Wartime*, *New York Times* columnist John Hutchens (1943) observed that 'it would appear [Dryer] is advocating the use of the controlled lie'. Protesting perhaps too little, Hutchens objected by asking what would happen when 'a people's army fighting a people's war inevitably learns it cannot trust its government?' Consummately practical, Hutchens warned that 'the answer is in American's revulsion against propaganda after the First World War, and quite apart from the moral aspect, the chance is not worth taking again'. Protesting perhaps too much, Hutchens's objection centred not on the noble lie's jeopardisation of democracy, but on its jeopardisation of a rehabilitated strategy of truth. The pantomime of debate pitted abstract liberal truth against abstract conservative expediency to the end of crystallising a bipartisan consensus on the need for a large-scale information programme in the United States. The only question that remained was what degree of illiberalism would be countenanced in the name of wartime pragmatism.

Indeed, after the attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into the war, calls for expediency drew equivocations from erstwhile strategists of truth. Even Gordon Allport, one of the strategy of truth's most ardent proponents, now qualified his support. While still distinguishing 'democratic' from 'totalitarian' morale, Allport (1942, 7) now saw its importance in 'enabl[ing] us to keep our moral purposes straight, so that after the period of confusion and unavoidable lapses, the nation may return to its own guiding ethic'. Columbia University psychologist S. S. Sargent (1942, 168) went further: 'though distinctions can be made between propaganda and education', he argued, 'these tend to become unimportant in wartime'. Putting Dryer's epistemological critique to work, Sargent

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defined propaganda as 'the attempt to bring about desired attitudes by means of suggestion', from which again followed the corollary principle that *all* information was propaganda:

> [W]hen a writer does an article on the significance to Americans of Japanese conquest of Singapore, he is putting out propaganda; in each case an attempt is made to produce a desired effect upon public opinion. Propaganda may be used to aid American morale by stating and interpreting war aims, by fostering good will toward allies and hatred toward enemies – in fact by any appeal to reason or emotion which may evoke confidence, enthusiasm, and determined effort. (p. 169)

In this form, the premise that all information necessarily influences sought to obviate the possibility of a government information service that could avoid producing propaganda. In the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Rudolf Ekstein (1942, 377) argued that 'democratic dogma' was safe in ordinary times, but that 'in times of emergency it might become dangerous'. Every 'grown-up', he wrote, should be allowed to run their own life, but 'an emergency operation needs experts and does not allow for democratic discussion with the patient'. A paternalistic political imaginary therefore replaced previous enthusiasm for an organic 'bottom up' democratic morale. Whereas the strength of democratic morale had previously been imagined as its appeal to the intellect, Ekstein now saw this as the 'great weakness' of democratic ideology. 'The intellect does not reach the main parts of the Nazi ideology', he claimed, citing the danger that fascism might in the United States 'arouse old latent infantile attitudes always ready to overpower the defense system of the intellect' (p. 378).

By 1943, saccharine invocations of democratic morale had largely been replaced by calls for expedience and latitude. Thus, concluded Ekstein (1942, 383), 'propaganda should not be considered from the moral point of view but from the point of view of effect … The actual device used might not fit into our moral code, [but] the tools and materials used to build and safeguard a Democracy do not always mirror the ideology of Democracy'. Allport and Veltfort (1943, 190) himself did an about-face: 'gone', he wrote 'are the subtle distinctions established during the 20's and 30's to mark off propaganda from education':

> wartime brooks no such distinction, and indeed, earlier distinctions seem untenable in retrospect … A soldier impressed by [Frank Capra's] documentary film *A Prelude to War*, sponsored by the U.S. Army, remarked '*it's all propaganda, but I guess it's true*'. And so it is.

As the United States headed into the Second World War, therefore, psychological warfare's earliest theorists inwardly rejected the constraints of the so-called strategy of truth, however outwardly they upheld it to maintain the image of US psychological warfare in the public's mind.

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The strategy of candour

If an inward-facing consensus emerged among the OWI's strategists of truth that their work should ultimately bend towards the expedience and exceptionality of war, outwardly the strategy of truth remained the ideological face of the OWI's engagement with both the US public and audiences abroad. As the OWI's first director, CNM member Elmer Davis styled the office's output as 'straight news' with a mandate 'not to suppress, but to reveal' (Miller 2008, 121). Drawing upon President Roosevelt's insistence that the US public had a 'right to be truthfully informed' (Miller 2008, 121), Davis succeeded in loosening press censorship within the bounds of operational security, notably on the issue of publication bans on images of dead American soldiers.

The ban's repeal led to a notorious controversy in 1943 when Henry Luce's *Life* magazine published a photograph of three dead American soldiers on a beach in New Guinea. Critics argued that lifting the ban had given some Americans 'more of the war than they can take' (Miller 2008, 121), but the images nevertheless contributed to the OWI's credibility as an organisation willing to 'show the good and the bad'. Lost in the controversy were the behind-the-scenes considerations animating the publication of the images. The push to lift the publication ban had in fact come at the insistence of Gordon Allport, now a principal recruiter of social scientists for the OSS and OWI.

While the decision to loosen *some* censorship was framed as part of the OWI's strategy of truth and the 'right' of the American people to be informed, Davis's push to lift the publication ban on photos of dead Americans followed fellow CNM member Gordon Allport's insistence that, contrary to prevailing ideas, negative headlines could help build domestic morale. Alongside his brother Floyd, Gordon Allport had conducted surveys suggesting that 'negative' news headlines could produce greater effects upon national morale than 'positive' ones (Johnson & Nichols 1998, 62). In a study of research subjects' reactions to sixty headlines, the Allport brothers concluded that headlines eliciting anger were correlated with 'positive morale' and a desire to 'take a more active part in the war' (as cited in Johnson 1998, 63). By contrast, a separate study of over 3,000 headlines determined that a majority of US newspapers favoured optimistic frames for reporting the war. The study also concluded that headline framing had little effect on circulation, suggesting that negative frames could be employed without affecting a publisher's bottom line (Winship & Allport, 1943).

The Allports' findings served as the basis of an article in the trade journal *Editor & Publisher* urging editors to employ negative news frames to exploit anger for morale value. Stressing that 'words are weapons', Floyd Allport exhorted publishers to 'use the phraseology of the headline, and the legitimate emotions it arouses in the reader, to cure the evil of complacency and help us on toward victory' (Allport *et al.* 1943, 11). Following the article, Floyd sent 200 letters to the

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editors of major American newspapers urging their compliance, with the *Editor & Publisher* article attached. Though it is difficult to ascertain the effect of the Allports' campaign, at least one government official cited it as the direct cause of the US Navy's revision of its policy concerning publicity about casualties (Johnson 1998, 64).

From a morale perspective, the decision to publish images of fallen soldiers therefore had the double virtue of rousing Americans to anger while also producing the perception that the OWI was not attempting to censor or conceal the reality of the war. It was an early example of what the cold warrior Ralph White (1952) would later call, not the strategy of truth, but the 'strategy of candor': an acknowledgement of the public's incredulity towards blatant propaganda, and an effort to 'counteract the idea of "propaganda" in the sense of calculated distortion'. As White (1952, 539) later noted,

> the world is more and more tired of 'propaganda'. This is the fundamental, all-embracing fact which every propagandist must face, and the implications of which he must recognize … The psychological resistances of a skeptical, propaganda-weary world must be respected and intelligently taken into account; they cannot be simply battered down.

If the conception of 'democratic morale' was tied to the problem of the public's 'deadly cynicism' towards propaganda, the strategy of candour appears grounded in an effort, not to assert an authoritative or democratic vision of truth, but to dissimulate the artifice of propaganda efforts. As White argued, this involved a focus on 'selectivity', a commitment not to true or positive presentation of news, but judgement concerning the optimal way to simulate candour and dissimulate artifice.[3]

The arc of US information efforts to meet the apparent threat of German psychological warfare therefore runs from a highly idealised, pre-Pearl Harbor vision of 'democratic morale' as a form of national security based upon appeal to the intellect through a 'strategy of truth', to a post-Pearl Harbor 'strategy of candour' based upon an appearance of objectivity underwritten by attempts to leverage the emotional impact of news reporting. While the US public was assured that its information programmes would eschew Goebbels's strategy of 'terror, division, frightfulness and falsehood', be 'rooted in the truth that is our greatest asset', 'cherish the dignity of the individual', and 'resent the propaganda technique' (Hutchens 1942),

[3] On certain topics, only silence was to be observed. As White (1952, 547) wrote,

> the Negro in America, slums in America, unemployment, corruption, our attitude toward British socialism, shifts in our policy toward Germany and Japan, MacArthur's advance to the Yalu, Franco, Chiang Kai-shek, Indochina, North Africa, the Arab refugees, our disarmament in 1945, American 'imperialism' in Latin America, the perils of the arms race … . One hesitates even to broach such topics, knowing that any really honest treatment would involve certain 'admissions', and knowing that every 'admission' carries a certain danger.

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practitioners and theorists of national morale nevertheless inwardly held that wartime expedience justified a state of exception to 'democratic dogma' that, as social psychologist Rudolf Ekstein (1942, 377) put it, 'did not allow for democratic discussion with the patient'.

Furthermore, debates over the politics of truth – whether the United States should in all cases remain truthful or resort to using 'relevant duplicity' or the 'controlled lie' – now centred on the *content* of information rather than the material circumstances of its production and distribution. The limited terms of this debate allowed for assurances of 'truth' to obscure the scope and scale of US propaganda activities. As detailed in the following section, limiting the frame of propaganda critique to its ideological content helped obscure its territorial reach. Despite its anti-geopolitical rhetoric, in the theatres of the Second World War the United States' strategy of truth became a strategy of territory.

Psychological war and the politics of territory

Though the United States Air Force would become the service most involved in the study and prosecution of psychological warfare in the 20th century, in the early years of the Second World War Allied air forces were not only sceptical of psychological warfare's effectiveness, but also often resentful of the risk involved in flying sorties to test the unproven strategy of propaganda leafleting – many pilots still preferred 'steel over paper' (Hall 1945). After the war, the British Royal Air Force's (RAF) Arthur 'Bomber' Harris (1947, 36) remarked that 'the only thing achieved [by dropping leaflets] was largely to supply the Continent's requirements of toilet paper for the five long years of war'. Sometimes RAF pilots went so far as to ignore orders to fly dangerous sorties for the sake of leaflet drops. An illustrated pamphlet titled *RAF against Goebbels* (RAF 1941) subsequently attempted to convince British pilots of the usefulness of psychological war,[4] quoting Edmond Taylor, Ewald Banse, and Herman Rauschning's fabulated *Conversations with Hitler*.[5]

Others also demurred. In the estimation of British historian A. J. P. Taylor, the primary purpose of leaflet production was to occupy intellectuals and to keep them 'out of the hair' of military commanders (cited in Oakland 2012). However, others were more optimistic, and field reports on early propaganda efforts, such as those of British journalist turned soldier George Steer, were influential in establishing

[4] In British doctrine 'political warfare' was synonymous with the US term psychological warfare.

[5] The quotations were, however, somewhat convoluted. A quote from Ewald Banse's *Raum und Volk* about 'breaking down psychological defenses' was attributed to Hitler. It is unclear whether or not the misattribution was deliberate or not; however, the authoritative citation of Edmond Taylor further suggests his importance in constructing the mythology of psychological war.

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ad hoc principles for the conduct of psychological warfare in theatre settings. Writing from Khartoum in 1941, Steer (1941) outlined his approach to British propaganda efforts in Eritrea and Ethiopia, noting the crucial geographical demarcation of the front. Steer argued that different approaches were required for psychological war efforts behind an advancing front, where 'consolidation propaganda' required the issuance of directives to civilian populations, and efforts beyond the front, where enemy soldiers could only be targeted with leaflets, loudspeakers, or radio broadcasts.

To target these various audiences, Steer urged the production of extensive statistical surveys of the Balkans, Turkey, Italy, France, Spain, and North Africa, especially regarding those regions' populations and communication infrastructure. He insisted that Allied forces must understand the communication landscape of the territories they wished to occupy. They must know how many printing presses operated in a given territory, as well as the political affiliations of their proprietors and editors. They must know the number of radio broadcasting stations, their location, the type of receiver sets used by listeners, as well as their 'prevailing political complexion' (Steer 1941; see also Pinkerton & Dodds 2009). Steer directed that 'without exception' enemy prisoners of war (POWs) and deserters were to be interrogated for this crucial information (emphasis in original).

Early US psychological warfare efforts also attempted to gather geographical intelligence relating to communication infrastructure and audience composition in advance of Operation Torch's North African landings. In the summer of 1942, the OSS produced extensive reporting on existing psychological war efforts already underway in North Africa, outlining the various groups and factions among the populations. The American psychologist Hadley Cantril conducted surveys in North Africa in advance of the Allied landings, concluding that forces composed solely of American soldiers would 'without doubt' meet less resistance than one involving British troops, due to apparent French scepticism concerning British imperial aims, as well as 'lingering memories of past wars with England' (Cantril 1965, 402).

In radio, psychological warfare operations preceded the African landings, with the British Political Warfare Executive arriving in Gibraltar as early as May 1942 to monitor neutral and enemy radio broadcasts. However, it was in support of Operation Torch in October 1942 that the first major psychological war campaigns were organised under the newly created pan-Allied Psychological Warfare Branch of Allied Forces Headquarters (PWB/AFHQ). Psychological warfare on Operation Torch's several fronts aimed to convince Vichy French troops not to resist the American landings. Over five million leaflets prepared by the British Political Intelligence Division in London were approved by Allied Headquarters. The leaflet cache consisted largely of the 'Eisenhower declaration' (Figure 2.1) and

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Message du Président des Etats Unis

Le Président des Etats Unis m'a chargé comme Général Commandant en Chef des Forces Expéditionnaires Américaines de faire parvenir aux peuples de l'Afrique française du Nord le message suivant:

Aucune nation n'est plus intimement liée, tant par l'histoire que par l'amitié profonde, au peuple de France et à ses amis que ne le sont les Etats Unis d'Amérique.

Les Américains luttent actuellement, non seulement pour assurer leur avenir, mais pour restituer les libertés et les principes démocratiques de tous ceux qui ont vécu sous le drapeau tricolore.

Nous venons chez vous pour vous libérer des conquérants qui ne désirent que vous priver à tout jamais de vos droits souverains, de votre droit à la liberté du culte, de votre droit de mener votre train de vie en paix.

Nous venons chez vous uniquement pour anéantir vos ennemis — nous ne voulons pas vous faire de mal.

Nous venons chez vous en vous assurant que nous partirons dès que la menace de l'Allemagne et de l'Italie aura été dissipée.

Je fais appel à votre sens des réalités ainsi qu'à votre idéalisme.

Ne faites rien pour entraver l'accomplissement de ce grand dessein. Aidez-nous, et l'avènement du jour de la paix universelle sera hâté.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Lieutenant Général, Commandant en Chef
des Forces Expéditionnaires Américaines.

Figure 2.1 The Eisenhower declaration (OWI 1942)

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was distributed in advance of the landings by Wellington aircraft at Algiers, Oran, Casablanca, and Blida. The leaflets asked French forces and North Africans to welcome American troops as liberators:

> We come to you to liberate you from your conquerors, whose only desire is to deprive you of your sovereign right to worship freely and your right to live your way of life in peace … We come to you solely to defeat your enemies – we wish you no harm. We come to you with the assurance that we will leave as soon as the menace of Germany and Italy is dissipated. Help us and the day of universal peace will arrive.

While the Second World War later became foundational to the mythology that American military forces act as 'liberators' around the globe, in the early years of the war the formative narrative was supported by Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms' publicity campaign, which attempted to tie the American war effort to liberal-democratic ideals, here the invocation of 'universal peace' and freedom of religion (Laurie 1996).

In addition to the leaflets, General Dwight Eisenhower arranged for French General Henri Giraud to address French troops by radio broadcast. Giraud had been living in Algiers after a high-profile escape from a German POW prison near Dresden, and Eisenhower believed that his word might hold sway and convince French troops to lay down their arms (Langer 1947). In his broadcast, Giraud announced to the French soldiers that he was assuming their command; however, he was largely ignored and Vichy troops offered stiff resistance to the landings. Despite its early efforts to survey the war's human terrain, psychological warfare appeared to pay few dividends on the battlefields of North Africa (Eisenhower 1948, 104).

Other setbacks plagued the North African psychological war campaign, from personnel and paper shortages to interagency conflicts and 'steel over paper' pilots refusing to fly leaflet sorties. What leaflets were dropped often drifted out to sea or were lost in the desert (Hall 1945). Nonetheless, the mechanics of leafleting were refined through trial and error, and novel psychological war practices were innovated, including the leaflet artillery shell (Figure 2.2) and the ubiquitous 'safe conduct pass' designed to encourage enemy desertion and surrender (Figure 2.3).

Perhaps most important, however, was the front-line newspaper, which purported to bring 'factual news' to troops behind enemy lines. Though it is doubtful the targets of front-line newspapers would receive them as 'objective' sources of news, the papers nevertheless attempted to follow the 'strategy of truth' by simulating the tone and appearance of journalistic writing. As the OWI would later make clear, this editorial policy sought to 'select stories for their informational value to the reader and keep the propaganda content present only by implication' (OWI 1944, 17). The *Afrika-Post* (Figure 2.4) was among the first such

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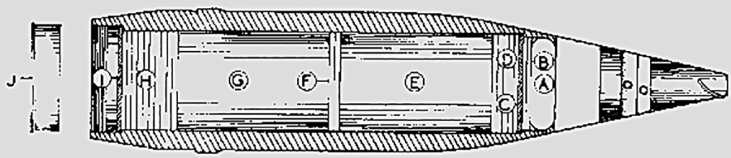
HEADQUARTERS PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BRANCH
COL. C. B. HAZELTINE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LOADING AMERICAN 105mm PROPAGANDA SHELL
WITH LEAFLETS



1. Remove rear plug J, sealing disc I, washers H, and baffle plate C.
2. Insert bag of black powder A.
3. Insert baffle plate C and five cardboard discs D.
4. Insert rolls of leaflets E and G (approx 225 4-1/2 x 7 leaflets per roll wrapped tightly with two
5. sheets of newsprint). Place two cardboard discs between rolls, F.
   Wad remaining space with discs H until sealing disc I just fails to seat.
6. Insert sealing disc I and screw on base plug J. NOTE: Thread on base plug is LEFT HAND.
   Actual leaflet space available approx. 10-3/4"

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BRANCH

COL. C. B. HAZELTINE COMMANDING — PREPARED BY CAPT. O. PAUL HERZIG

GENERAL INFORMATION ON AMERICAN 105 m m PROPAGANDA SHELL

SHELL : The shell used by the American Forces for the distribution of propaganda leaflets by Artillery Fire is the 105 m.m Howitzer Smoke Shell which must be requisitioned but which is usually available in a Theater of Operations.

STRIPPING : To strip the shell the following procedure will be used: Unscrew base plate J (LEFT HAND THREAD) remove sealing disc I, cardboard washers H, 3 smoke cannisters, baffle plate C, and bag of powder A. (Note: For designation of letters see attached drawing).

LOADING : SEE ATTACHED DRAWING.

ROLLING : The shell will hold any roll or rolls of leaflets that does not exceed approximately 10-½" in length. Using a 7" x 9" leaflet it will hold approximately 225 leaflets. If a 4½" x 7 leaflet is used about 500 leaflets may be stored in the shell. If the leaflets are loaded as soon as they are rolled the outside binding papers need not be gummed, otherwise this must be done in order to keep the leaflets in position. It is mandatory that the roll is made as tight as possible to produce a minimum amount of crinkling upon discharge.

ELEVATION : It has been found that the best results are obtained when the fuse setting is so that the leaflets are released at an elevation of from 300 to 400 feet above the ground.

DISTRIBUTION: Distribution of the leaflets depends very largely on the wind. With a very light breeze the leaflets leaving the shell at a height of 300 to 400 feet will cover an area of 130 to 170 yards in diameter just below the point of burst; if there is a cross wind of 12 to 15 miles per hour, the leaflets will land from three to four hundred yards from the point of burst in an area of about 150 yards in diameter. It is interesting to note that the area covered does not vary appreciably regardless of the wind condition.

Figure 2.2 Artillery leaflet shell (Friedman n.d.e)

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Figure 2.3 A safe conduct pass leaflet for German soldiers (Friedman n.d.e)

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AFRIKA-POST

WOCHENBLATT FUER DEUTSCHE TRUPPEN IN TUNESIEN

Nr. 4 — den 8. Februar 1943

KAPITULATION IN RUSSLAND

Paulus hat sich ergeben, die Sechste deutsche Armee existiert nicht mehr. Von den 330.000 Mann, die dort eingekesselt waren, haben mindestens ein Drittel freiwillig die Waffen gestreckt ; die anderen sind tot. Unter den Gefangenen befinden sich 22 deutsche Generaele, darunter der Generalfeldmarschall Paulus und 2 Generalobersten. Ausserdem haben 2.500 deutsche Offiziere kapituliert. Die Goebbels-Luege, dass die Soldaten von Stalingrad bis zur letzten Patrone gekaempft haetten, ist geplatzt, ebenso ist die Behauptung unwahr, dass Paulus schwer verletzt auf dem Schlachtfeld aufgefunden sei ; in allen Zeitungen der freien Welt kann man heute ein Photo bei der Vernehmung durch den russischen Marschall Woronow sehen.

Paulus und die 2.500 Offiziere hatten den Befehl von Hitler erhalten, der lautete : « Das Gesetz gebietet den deutschen Offizieren und Soldaten, zu sterben ». Die 110.000 deutschen Soldaten und die Generaele haben das hoehere Gebot des deutschen Volkes gehoert, das ihnen befahl, das Leben zu erhalten fuer kuenftiges Deutschland.

Die deutsche Armee hat sich mit grosser Tapferkeit geschlagen, aber dem deutschen Volke haben die Ueberlebenden einen besseren Dienst erwiesen als die Gefallenen.

Die Lage auf der gesamten russischen Suedfront ist verzweifelt. Die fluechtenden Ueberreste der deutschen Kaukasus-Armee sind durch die Besetzung der wichtigen Eisenbahnknotenpunkte Tikhoretsk und Kuschewskaia vom Norden abgeschnitten ; sie versuchen, sich ueber die Kertsch-Halbinsel zur Krim zu retten, aber es besteht wenig Aussicht fuer das Gelingen ihres Unternehmens. Rostow ist von drei Seiten angegriffen ; im Sueden und Osten sind die Russen bis in die Vororte eingedrungen. Durch den Fall von Kupiansk (— 100 km. von Karkow —) ist die Hauptstadt der Ukraine bedroht. Kursk und Orel sind bereits umgangen ; hier sind die deutschen Winterstellungen des letzten Winters bereits durchbrochen.

So hat Gefreiter HITLER die deutsche Armee in die schwerste militaerische Niederlage seiner Geschichte hineingefuehrt.

Beim Drucken erfahren wir : Kursk hat sich ergeben.

SO SEID IHR !

In jahrelangen Kaempfen seid Ihr stur geworden wie die Panzer.

Ihr moechtet den Krieg beendet sehen, Ihr wollt heim, aber Ihr tut nichts dazu und sagt nur : « Es wird schon gut werden », kuemmert Euch nicht um die Politik.

Gelegentlich bricht einmal Euer klarer Verstand durch, und Ihr sagt : « Der Krieg ist ja doch verloren ». Gleich darauf erschreckt Ihr aber vor Euren eignen Gedanken und redet Euch selbst neuen Glauben zu. Ihr macht vor Euch selbst Propaganda mit Saetzen aus Hitlers und Goebbels Reden, und wisst im Inneren doch, dass alles nur politische Spitzfindigkeiten und Schlagworte sind.

Ihr wolltet gern aufhoeren ; aber Ihr moechtet nicht diejenigen sein, die es machen wie 1918. Dabei seht Ihr selbst, das es fuer Euch kein gutes Ende nimmt. Aber lieber opfert Ihr einen Kameraden nach dem anderen, lasst Euren Vater bis zum Umfallen arbeiten, Euren Bruder zum Krueppel schiessen, Eure Mutter und Frau sich Jahr um Jahr um Euch graemen, als dass Ihr die Waffen niederlegt.

Ihr habt Angst vor der Verantwortung ; und macht Euch selbst mitschuldig am Untergang Eures Volkes.

Wenn Ihr jetzt Schluss macht, hat wohl der Nationalsozialismus aufgehoert zu sein, aber der Bestand Eures Volkes und Euer persoenliches normales Leben ist gesichert. Kaempft Ihr aber bis zur endgueltigen Niederlage, dann werden nicht mehr genug Maenner uebrig sein, um Euer Volk zu erhalten. Koennt Ihr das verantworten ?

DIE FRAGEN, DIE WIR STELLEN

1) Wieviele der 8 deutschen Flugzeuge sind zurueckgekehrt, die am 26. Januar einen englischen Flugplatz in Tunesien anzugreifen versuchten ?

2) Warum ist die Einheit Klar so nachlaessig im Ueberwachen ihrer Kraeder ?

3) Hat I/Pz. Gren. 86 immer noch keine Kraftfahrzeuge bekommen ?

4) Wo, wann und warum gingen zwei Generalstabsoffiziere einer deutschen Division in Tunesien verloren ?

5) Bist Du, der einfache Landser, jemals bei einem der beruehmten Tees in der « Patisserie Royale de Tunis » gewesen ? Die Offiziere sind gern dorthin gegangen.

6) Glaubt 3/Regt. Barenthin, sie wird bis Ende des Krieges mit bloss zwei Zuegen kaempfen muessen ?

7) Wieviele deutsche Offiziere in Tunesien waeren bereit, der Truppe ihre w a h r e Meinung ueber die Aussichten der deutschen Sache in Afrika zu sagen ?

8) Was hat Geb. J. Reg. 756 am liebsten : Salzkammergut oder Djebel Mansour ?

9) Was bleibt jetzt noch von der Kp. Friedrich des Korps Fallschirmjaeger Pionier Btl. uebrig ?

10) Wirst DU, der diese Zeilen liest, deinen Aufenthalt in Tunesien als Leichnam oder als Kriegsgefangener beenden ?

EURE SOEHNE, EURE MUETTER

Am 28 Januar wurde ein neuer Erlass der Reichsregierung ausgegeben. Demnach sind von jetzt ab alle Maenner von 16 bis 65 Jahren, und alle Frauen von 17 bis 45, dem Dienste des Staates unmittelbar unterworfen.

Die aeltesten unter Euch werden also bald ihre 16- jaehrigen Soehne als Kameraden im Felde haben. Und die juengeren werden erfahren, dass ihre Muetter die Heimat haben verlassen muessen, um in den Ruestungsbetrieben des Ruhrgebietes zu schuften.

Goebbels, in seiner Rede am zehnten Jahrestag der Machtuebernahme, sagte : « Es sind Massnahmen getroffen worden, die den totalen Kriegseinsatz organisieren und praktisch durchfuehren werden. Wir werden schnell und ruecksichtslos handeln. Ausnahmen koennen nicht gemacht werden. Und wer nicht mitmachen will, der wird vernichtet ».

DER AUSLAENDER DAHEIM

Waehrend Ihr hier in Tunesien kaempft, wird Euer Arbeitsplatz daheim von fluechtig gelernten auslaendischen Arbeitern eingenommen, die Seite an Seite mit Euren Frauen arbeiten. Die Technik schreitet fort, Ihr bleibt zurueck, waehrend die Auslaender lernen, mit Ihr Schritt zu halten. Wenn Ihr heim kommt, werden Euch die auslaendischen Arbeiter mit Leichtigkeit aus dem Felde schlagen koennen. Sie werden Euch aus den besser bezahlten gelernten Stellen draengen.

F a l l s Ihr heim kommt.... Und mit heilen Gliedern....

WARUM NUR DIE KLEINEN ?

Auf Grund eines Erlasses vom 4. Februar muessen im Dritten Reich alle Kleingewerbetreibenden, Kaufleute, Handwerker und Gastwirte, die nicht unmittelbar fuer die Ruestungsindustrie arbeiten, ihren Betrieb schliessen. Damit wird der gesamte deutsche Mittelstand vernichtet.

Hast Du, deutscher Landser, nicht auch einen Vater daheim, der sein ganzes Leben fuer den Aufbau seines Geschaefts geschuftet hat und dem jetzt alles genommen wird ? Aber die Gressindustrie besteht natuerlich weiter.

Figure 2.4 *Afrika-Post* from February 1943 (OWI 1943e)

single-sheet front-line newspapers published in German, succeeded later by the *Feldpost* (Figure 2.5), which was heavily used by the Allies in Italy, France, and Germany (Oakland 2012).

Unlike printed materials, radio as a tool of psychological warfare did not move with the front, and seizing control over North Africa's radio transmitters became a primary objective for Allied psychological warriors entering Rabat,

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Feldpost

24. Nummer · 12 HG

Erste März Nr.

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON DER AMERIKANISCHEN ARMEE IN WESTEUROPA

Bombenhagel über Deutschland

LONDON. — Die große Luftoffensive gegen Verkehrs- und Industrieziele in Deutschland wird pausenlos weitergeführt. Vom 13. Februar bis zum 1. März warfen 16 750 Großbomber Millionen Brand- und Sprengbomben ab. (Für die hauptsächlichen Ziele siehe unsere Landkarte).

Westfront

PARIS. — Die alliierte Offensive im Westen macht rasche Fortschritte. Die Amerikaner haben die große Industriestadt München-Gladbach genommen, haben den Rhein bei Neuß erreicht und Venlo erobert. Andere amerikanische Einheiten im Anmarsch von Düren und Zülpich haben die Erft überschritten und stehen 8 km vor Köln. Köln und Düsseldorf liegen unter Artilleriefeuer. Die Amerikaner sind ins Innere von Trier eingedrungen.

Ostfront

MOSKAU. — Sowjettruppen rücken nach Einnahme von Bublitz, Arnswalde und Neustettin auf 35 km breiter Front auf Köslin und die pommersche Ostseeküste vor. Danzig und breite Teile Pommerns sind vom Rest Deutschlands abgeschnitten. In Ostpreußen ist der deutsche Kessel nur mehr 32 km lang und 24 km breit. Die Russen haben eine Anzahl der Vororte von Breslau genommen; im Stadtinnern selbst rücken die Russen ständig vor.

Figure 2.5 *Feldpost*: an American newspaper leaflet to Germany from 1 March 1945 (OWI 1945b)

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Oran, Algiers, and Constantine. Upon taking control of these cities' radio stations, the Allies began broadcasts in English, French, German, Italian, and Arabic, reproducing the standard Western format of music and entertainment punctuated with news, commentary, and directives to populations behind the Allied front. Occupying territory in North Africa allowed the Allies to build a reception and monitoring station near Algiers in Bouzarea, where news from British and American stations in Europe could be received and repurposed for local circulation, creating a vital line of communication from OWI offices in London and New York to the North African theatre (Hall 1945). In Algiers, the Allies also constructed their first major broadcast station of the war, a massive 50 kilowatt radio transmitter that had been decommissioned by the American Broadcasting Corporation and shipped intact from New York City on the deck of an American warship. Despite significant damage caused by the journey, repair and installation of the transmitter was underway in early March of 1943, with the first broadcast from the station – dubbed 'Hippo' – appearing on 14 June, 'United Nations Day'.

While General Giraud's appeal to French soldiers had failed, taking Algiers provided the Allies with another opportunity to end hostilities with Vichy forces. Vichy Admiral François Darlan had arrived in Algiers on 7 November 1942, the day before the city fell to the Allies. Unlike Giraud, Darlan had real authority over Vichy troops, and his capture effectively ended Vichy French resistance once Eisenhower secured his cooperation. While the agreement was an incredible military expedient, the infamous 'Darlan deal' was widely criticised in Britain and the United States, prompting an exasperated Edward R. Murrow to ask 'what the hell is that all about? Are we fighting Nazis or sleeping with them' (cited in Eisenhower 1974, 137). The OWI's Robert Sherwood (1948, 655) similarly noted that the deal 'inspired plenty of gleeful quips by Goebbels and his satellite broadcasters in Rome and Paris'.

Collaboration with Vichy France also created conflict within the OWI. In an effort to mitigate the damage, C. D. Jackson flew to North Africa to defend Eisenhower's deal with Darlan against attacks from OWI journalists and writers who, as Jackson wrote, only wanted 'to spit in Eisenhower's eye' (Cook 1984, 46). Many of the writers resigned over the controversy (Weinberg 1968), to which Jackson said good riddance, having had with them 'enough long hair to stuff the mattresses for an entire invasion force' (Cook 1984, 46). Efforts to spin the Darlan deal attempted to leverage the rhetoric of the 'Four Freedoms': 'No one will go hungry … in any territory occupied by the United Nations, if it is humanely within our power to make the necessary supplies available to them', insisted Roosevelt in a press statement. The *New York Times* (14 November 1942) toed the line that 'in informed circles' the move was considered 'as both a humane action and an important weapon in the psychological war', though neither claim was elaborated

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upon. The paper of record went so far as to suggest that the Darlan deal could encourage the raising of 'peoples' armies' in North Africa, which could 'throw out Axis conquerors'. It was perhaps a cynical claim, given that a central provision of the Darlan deal provided that after the war, French colonialism in North Africa would be allowed a free hand, 'however repressive' (Winkler 1978, 85). The OWI's attempts to present the Darlan deal as the 'liberation' of North Africa were therefore strained. As another top OWI official recounted, '[the words] sounded thin and unreal and brought no comfort. Oh, for one little act to give meaning to those words!' (Carroll 1948, 72).

In contrast to the OWI's claims concerning the humanitarian liberation of North Africa, Darlan's short-lived command there continued repressive Vichy policies, including the jailing of political opponents, holding Jews in internment camps, and keeping anti-Jewish laws in force. In the United States, OWI director Elmer Davis issued a statement concerning a Federal Communications Commission (FFC) report that had discovered anti-Semitic statements while monitoring broadcasts out of Radio Maroc in Morocco. Davis downplayed the broadcast as representative of only a 'small reactionary youth movement', claiming that 'cooperation is improving' and that thirteen of twenty-one news items used by Radio Maroc that day had been supplied by the OWI. 'Occasionally' he said, 'they put over something like this on us' (Jewish Telegraphic Agency 1942). Davis assured the press that Milton Eisenhower, Dwight's brother and associate director of the OWI, had arrived in Algiers and was now working to foster cooperation between the OWI and the radio stations controlled by Darlan.

North Africa's other Eisenhower

Milton Eisenhower's arrival in North Africa was a significant development for US psychological warfare. He played a key role in shaping the development of OWI operations behind Allied lines, while brokering deals between the OWI and his brother Dwight in the field (Winkler 1978, 29, 88). Though he is primarily remembered for his career as president of three major American universities after the war, during the war Milton Eisenhower was a crucial intermediary between the Allied psychological warfare effort and private American media companies. Though most nations at war favoured state-centralised propaganda/information programmes, the United States often made its private media industries the front line of its psychological warfare efforts. This public–private framework was portrayed in US media as productively antagonistic, with each element providing checks and balances on the other. Indeed, the claim that a private press underwrote objective news was central to American claims that its psychological warfare agencies, by working with private media instead of taking them over, could be

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relied upon to guarantee the strategy of truth. Thus the American press celebrated its collaboration with American psychological warfare agencies 'on a voluntary basis and in a private capacity' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1942).

For Milton Eisenhower, however, the war was an opportunity not to oppose public and private prerogatives but to unite them. He saw the war as an opportunity both to open global markets to commercial American media and to establish permanent outposts for American information programmes after the war. Though initially heavy government involvement would be required, Eisenhower envisioned a global post-war communication system dominated by American capital, a strategy of public–private partnership to expand the remit of American commercial media activity, and to make private media the avant-garde of American psychological warfare. As early as spring 1943, Milton Eisenhower argued for the post-war maintenance of a 'world communications system' on the model of the OWI's 'success in communicating "factual information" about the United States'. Speaking before the Kansas Bankers Association, Eisenhower argued that 'a constant world-wide interchange of information can help us achieve an enduring peace as surely as it is now helping us to win this war' (*New York Times*, 23 May 1943). The idea presaged the United States' Cold War rhetoric that an international 'free flow of information', based on free trade and private ownership of the press, could serve as a guarantor of press freedom and the opposite number of 'totalitarian' state-controlled media (Nordenstreng 2011; Peters 2004; Schiller 1976). As John Foster Dulles later remarked, 'if I were to be granted one point in foreign policy and no other, I would make it the free flow of information' (Schiller 1976, 30).

While Siebert *et al.*'s (1956, 70) seminal *Four Theories of the Press* soon attempted to root a 'libertarian theory' of press freedom in the tradition of John Milton and J. S. Mill, Peters (2004) has shown that the idea of the 'self-righting ship of the free marketplace of ideas' emerged only in the mid-20th century, and most vividly during the Cold War.[6] The OWI, however, was vital not only in articulating this vision of a market-based, US-led international communication order, but also in possessing the territorial reach to implement policy and empower US media companies behind Allied lines. As Milton Eisenhower insisted in 1943, any proposed peace treaty that would end the war should provide for a 'free press' throughout the world. For Eisenhower, this meant leaving press control to the 'private press associations of all countries'.

Behind Allied lines in North Africa, film became an important medium for the OWI's consolidation propaganda. After an initial phase of intervention in

[6] Peters (2004) traces the origins of the phrase 'free marketplace of ideas' to the 1930s but notes that the only time it appeared in the *New York Times* in the 1940s was in the American Communist Party platform for the 1948 election, which mocked the beginnings of the second red scare: 'We Communists seek only the opportunity to compete fairly in a free marketplace of ideas' (quoted in Peters 2004, 73).

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which the undesirable circulation of German and Vichy French films had been curtailed, the OWI began to circulate commercial American films which had been stockpiled in advance of the landings. By the summer of 1943 the OWI model of conducting psychological warfare by opening occupied markets to American exports was taking shape, with Hollywood firms sending representatives to conduct business along 'more normal commercial lines' (Pryor 1944). By autumn, Robert Riskin, the director of the Allied Psychological Warfare Branch's Overseas Motion Picture Bureau, boasted that 'practically all of the American [film] companies now have their own representatives in North Africa', and that 'the OWI bureau there functions primarily in an advisory capacity' (Pryor 1943b). If Gregory (2008, 34) has noted that the 'martialisation of culture marches in lockstep with its commodification', the *New York Times* confirmed that 'films accompanying our invading armies have become part and parcel of military operations' (Pryor 1943a).

When the Allies took Sicily in the summer of 1943, stockpiled Hollywood films entered Italy through supply lines in North Africa, and film circulation was set up as Axis films were confiscated (OWI 1944, 12). In rural areas without cinemas, OWI mobile picture units ran generators at makeshift facilities, sometimes churches, following closely behind advancing Allied armies, presaging what would become the ubiquitous 'Mobile Information Teams' deployed to the largely rural areas of Vietnam. In both cases, films were seen as a territorial strategy of pacification and were shown for the 'express purpose of aiding the Allied Military Government in restoring order in liberated areas' (Pryor 1943b).

The OWI favoured 'straight entertainment' in its spot selection of films for screening in Sicily (Pryor 1943a), though entertainment features were accompanied by OWI newsreels which 'graphically depicted American industrial might and the striking power of the British–American Armies in Tunisia'. Though in the early stages of pacification the place of commercial advertising was taken by Allied newsreels and features, the OWI set up the private model it wished to export, namely the private commercial media system it understood as the guarantor of both 'press freedom' and American hegemony. Here, the OWI proudly stated that its mission was 'to protect the rights of [the films'] various owners' (OWI 1944, 12).

Returning damaged cinemas to working order was a top priority for the OWI as Allied forces advanced through Italy. It was OWI policy to repair facilities and return theatres to commercial operation after 'careful consideration' of their previous owners. In practice, this meant an ad hoc licensing system whereby theatre owners were given custodial operation of their theatres on the basis that film selection would remain in the hands of the OWI. The licensing system gave the impression of contractual reciprocity, when in reality owners had little choice but to comply with OWI directives. When occupied Italian territory was secure enough for commercial cinema operation to resume, the OWI coordinated meetings

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between Hollywood representatives and local cinemas to arrange the continued distribution of American films, largely repeating the process pioneered in the North African theatre. The OWI's mission to 'protect the rights of film owners' and to open film markets to American exports thus combined with its 'strategy of truth', and commercial US film screenings were preceded by OWI short films that would give Italian audiences 'a factual account of the United States, its people, industries, culture and military might'.

The OWI's handling of the Italian press was similar to that of its film industry, with the distinction that news, unlike the primarily entertainment function of cinema, was explicitly political terrain. In the newspaper industry, a licensing system similar to that of the film industry was established, and papers that deviated from Allied messaging were censured and threatened with suspension (*New York Times*, 14 February 1944). More illustrative, however, was the method by which psychological warriors set to re-establishing the Italian press. Six months after US forces captured Rome in June 1944, the OWI sponsored the establishment of a news gathering agency that became the Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata (ANSA) – the Associated Press National Agency – which operated with OWI plant and financial support. The agency drew criticism, however, not least from Luigi Barzini Jr, a graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism and distinguished journalist in Italy.

Barzini had been arrested in 1940 for criticising Mussolini and had only been freed upon the Allied occupation of Rome. In attempting to establish his own press service – the Servicio Informazioni – Barzini decried Allied sponsorship of ANSA for commanding a monopoly on news gathering, and for its 'artificial hatching conditions' (Bracker 1945). Consistent with the OWI's policy of turning over operations to favoured locals, in January 1945 ANSA had been set to return to Italian control, though as Barzini noted, it continued to operate 'on PWB [Psychological Warfare Branch] premises with personnel trained by that bureau and light, heat, typewriter and mimeograph facilities of the PWB, all of which are now prohibitively costly to an independent trying to compete with ANSA' (Bracker 1945). In a letter of protest to the Allied Commission, Barzini argued that competition with ANSA would be impossible, and that he would need to recruit funding from 'special interests' to stay in operation. 'It would be immoral', he protested, 'to give the world the impression that there is now freedom of competition in the news agency field in Italy.'

Captain Orville Anderson of PWB, who had designed ANSA, conceded the criticism, noting that it would indeed be difficult for an independent news outlet to 'buck competition' from ANSA, but he justified ANSA's existence as necessary to guarantee 'a free anti-Fascist agency the widest possible scope and no secret financial support'. In other words, perhaps ironically, Allied psychological warriors insisted upon a temporary press monopoly to ensure 'freedom

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of the press' in Italy. Orville nonetheless defended his organisation by arguing that, as of February 1945, ANSA would be 'on its own' financially. Despite this ostensible independence, ANSA remained a model of US press influence: monopoly conditions fabricated through fixed capital subsidies transferred to private individuals who could be relied upon to support the United States' ideological positions in the looming Cold War.

The mechanical heart

By 1944 the fledgling experiments and improvisations of psychological warriors in North Africa and Italy had become standard practices for the European theatre in advance of the D-Day landings in Normandy. By the time of the landings, the OWI's London office had become a 'centre of calculation' (Barnes 2006), processing and circulating news to and from the war's far-flung theatres. The office was headed by *New York Times* journalist James Reston, a key figure in narrating the concept of psychological warfare to the US public. Begun as a relatively small operation in the summer of 1942, by 1944 the OWI's London office had grown into a massive, globe-spanning information programme.

The London office oversaw a number of divisions under its command. Its Radio Division produced over 8,000 fifteen-minute radio programmes in 1944, reaching the Continent over the OWI's American Broadcasting Station in Europe (ABSIE). Its Film Division produced weekly *United Newsreels* of 'the world at war', distributed to twenty-one countries in over a dozen languages. Its Picture Division distributed 1,400 news photographs each month by plane and the new 'radio photo' technology, and its Publications Division printed hundreds of thousands of glossy photo-journal magazines monthly for France, Belgium, and Holland. Finally, OWI London produced over fifteen tons of leaflets every day, most of which were dropped from aircraft over enemy territory.

It was in news production and distribution, however, that the OWI was most prodigious, with its London newsroom becoming its so-called mechanical heart (OWI 1944, 24). Figure 2.6 illustrates the geographical reach of OWI outposts in early 1943, as well as planned outposts that were completed in 1944. With over twenty-five major outposts on five continents, by the time of the Normandy landings in 1944 the OWI's outpost network had created a centralised world news service based in its London office that could orchestrate the global mediation of the European theatre. Begun as a collaborative effort between the OWI and the British Ministry of Information, a 'global news file' was produced for use on the BBC and ABSIE, as well as in local presses and radio where the OWI operated (Figures 2.7 and 2.8).

The 'global news file' was an attempt to standardise and assert hegemony over war reporting. Within a month of the Normandy landings, a wireless Morse news file was beamed to Normandy, Algiers, and Italy, to be picked up

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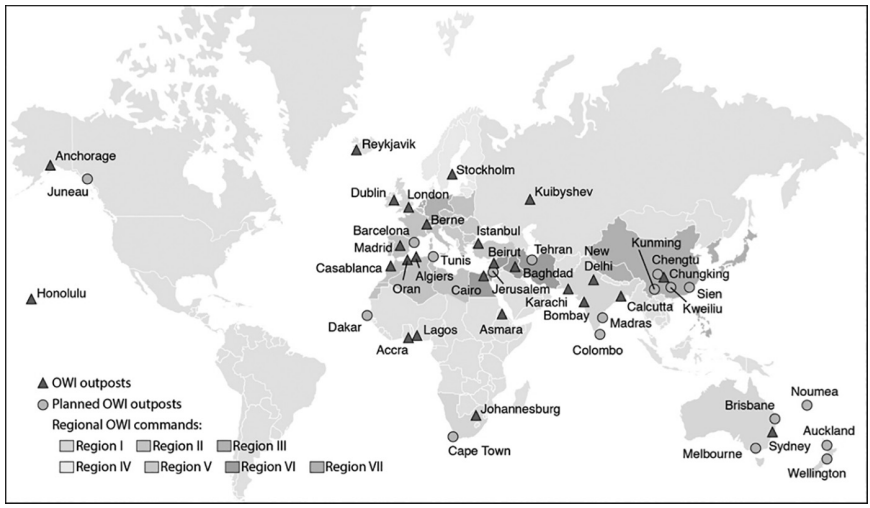

Figure 2.6 Map of existing and planned OWI outposts, *c*. March 1943 (Whyte 2018)

by trained PWB monitoring teams for use in re-establishing press and radio facilities, establishing key lines of communication between centralised planners at OWI London and local presses and radio stations in the field. As the OWI (1944, 25) recorded, by mid-August 1944, news was going out seventeen hours each day, and by September, the Morse transmitters were sending an 18,000-word English news file daily for the Mediterranean and a 7,000-word file in French for France.

In its own estimation, the OWI approximated the functions of private press services such as the Associated Press, film distributors, magazine publishers, and still picture syndicates. After tip of the spear operations, the OWI generally turned over these functions to private hands through official or conditional licensing systems. In France, the OWI (1944, 7) insisted it 'merely supervised' while French editors 'wrote the headlines, French compositors set the type, and French printers made the presses roll'. However, by vetting and recruiting sympathetic editors and radio station managers, the OWI's 'voluntarist' model simulated a 'free' private press by subsidising and licensing its preferred organs, ensuring they carried OWI news, exercised self-censorship, and published supportive editorial content. In France as elsewhere the OWI left behind 'information embassies', a kind of permanent psychological war base in the form of United States Information Service centres, which were later organised under the direction of the United States Information Agency (USIA).

As part of its effort to manage and supply news copy concerning the war around the globe, the OWI also attempted to manage the war's visuality by producing and distributing images of war. This was helped by the recent invention

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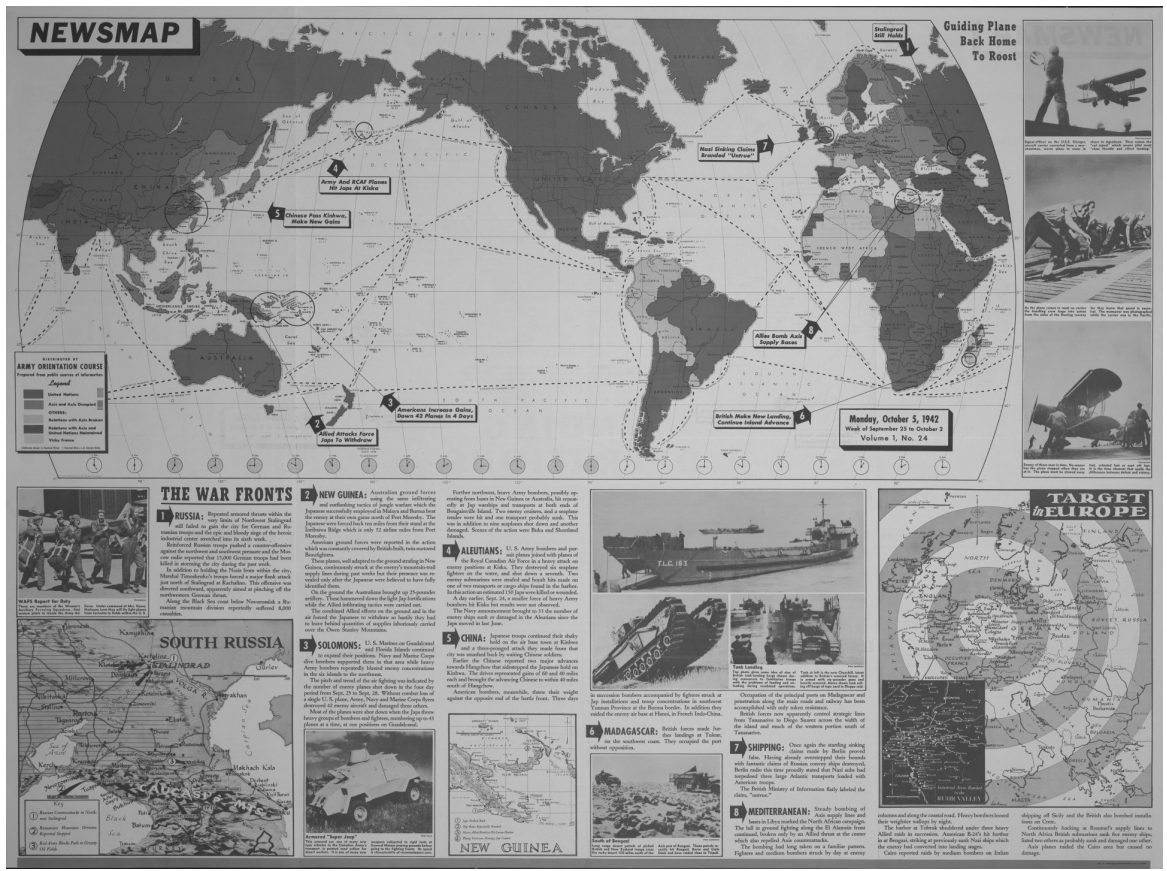

Figure 2.7 US Army newsmap (US Army 1942)

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The News Fights For Us

The oppressed people of Europe know by now that the news fed to them via the loudspeakers and presses of Dr. Goebbels is neither true nor sometimes even new, so that one of our best propaganda weapons is plain, simple news—the news which we freemen sometimes forget is not available to everyone.

Here are three newspapers in three languages which are dropped over Europe, but they are a little more than newspapers, in the American sense of the word. Sternenbanner, the German one (its name means, literally, "Star-Spangled Banner") goes beyond the fact of Italy's capitulation and explains the significance. This is because German home propaganda says that Italy's surrender to us is of no importance. We explain that it is, and why.

The French paper (its title means "Fighting America") stresses the fact that Italy surrendered—unconditionally—the only kind of surrender the United Nations accept. The picture of a disgruntled Hitler tells the news, too, as does the simple map with the caption—"And one less!"

Letter from America is the small-size Norwegian paper (small for easier smuggling) which gives the Norwegians the background of news from America. The lead story tells the epic of American production, and how this will affect the people of Norway. The picture of bombs from a Fort falling on Nazi installations at Trondheim, Norway, is captioned simply: "America Has Come."

Figure 2.8 'The News Fights for Us', excerpted from a restricted OWI booklet titled *White Bombs* (OWI 1943a)

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of the 'radiophoto', which allowed photographs to be transmitted wirelessly. As Milton Eisenhower boasted, 'along with the news goes a daily flow of American radio photos which speak a universal language … The United States has driven the Axis photo agencies from the top rank in most of the world's picture markets' (*New York Times*, 23 May 1943). OWI photographs even subsidised Britain's Fleet Street papers: between June and December of 1944, for example, the OWI's Picture Division sent over 18,000 photographs to Fleet Street papers, of which London dailies and magazines used nearly 3,000.

In geographical terms, the radiophoto enabled a round of visual time–space compression, allowing the OWI's London office to centralise the collection, selection, and distribution of war photography. Not only could OWI London assert visual hegemony through the distribution of standardised images of the war, it could also act as a collection centre, receiving images from around the world and depicting the war's Pacific fronts. As one OWI (1944, 14) report noted, the radio photo allowed for the

> [distribution of] pictures originating in this (pacific) theatre direct to 65 OWl outposts and State Department missions throughout the world, thus enabling them to tell in each area the picture story of the US war effort, co-operation with its Allies, and steps to restore and rehabilitate liberated countries.

Editors at OWI London's Picture Division selected roughly 3,000 photos of the 15,000 they received per month to serve as visual representations of the US war efforts around the globe. OWI pictures accompanied advancing Allied forces, and OWI photographs were 'displayed in store windows in almost every town and village' through which Allied armies advanced (OWI 1944, 15). The radiophoto similarly allowed for rapid visual coverage and framing of events in territories behind advancing Allied lines. When the French Second Armoured Division returned to the continent in Normandy, the Picture Division sent out eight radiophotos as flash coverage, and within twenty-four hours it had sent over 10,000 prints and 400 negatives to all parts of the world. By 1944, no OWI outpost with a radio receiver was more than seven minutes away from OWI spot news pictures.

By 1944 the OWI had negotiated over 7,600 contracts for the distribution of American films around the globe, managing even to turn a small profit for its Hollywood representatives. The OWI's Film Division 'attacked the problem' of 'safeguarding the rights of the American film industry in the distribution of commercial films on the continent' (OWI 1944, 12), seizing control over film circulation in periods of adjustment between liberation and 'the return of normal times'. The OWI also expanded its output of *United Newsreels*, which usually accompanied feature films in Allied-controlled cinemas or were shown to rural audiences by mobile information teams at makeshift facilities. The *United Newsreels* series was translated across the globe into more than twelve languages, including 'Arabic, Chinese [sic], Turkish, Czech and Afrikaans'. Films continued to play an important double role, on the one hand as American commercial products

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in overseas markets, but on the other, as the State Department put it, as 'an international builder of public opinion' (Segrave 1997, 131–3).

'With a rifle, not a shotgun'

In addition to its 'global news file', with which the OWI attempted to create a standardised global narrative for the war, it created regional commands and assigned to them 'specialists familiar with the territory' (*New York Times*, 23 February 1943). Regional commands and the outposts under their jurisdiction were meant to, in the OWI's own words, 'aim its propaganda with a rifle rather than a shotgun'. Indeed, outposts and regional commands were meant not only to circulate images and words more effectively, but also to 'receive in turn the reactions of world areas more completely'. Though sometimes couched in the language of cultural exchange or reciprocity, the OWI in fact produced relations of domination based upon an uneven geography of information circulation from and to the United States.

The OWI's Publications Division perhaps went furthest in specifying and refining the targets of its psychological war. The Publications Division often went beyond basic war reporting to present the coming 'American century' as a US-led international consumer society (Roholl 2012, 15). Visuality was at the heart of this project, for which the Publications Division produced photo journal magazines and digests for liberated, neutral, and even enemy-occupied territories. *Victory* magazine was the OWI's flagship publication, with translated issues being published and circulated across Europe. Based on the American magazine *Look*, the emphasis on visuality was apparent in their titles: in France, the OWI published *Voir* (Look); in Holland and Belgium *Kijk* (Look); and in Norway *Fotorevy* (Photo review). At the end of 1944, press runs for *Voir* stood at 425,000, for *Kijk* 100,000, and for *Fotorevy* 20,000. The former were sold through regular commercial agencies, while *Fotorevy* was smuggled into Norway and clandestinely distributed free of charge.

As Sharp (2001) has shown, the American journal *Reader's Digest* was an important medium for narrating the Cold War to American audiences, but the OWI's use of the digest format presaged its Cold War use, including the digest *Choix* (Choice) in France and *Il Mese* (The month) in Italy. The digests in particular were part of a larger Anglo-American project – the International Review Digest (Koutsopanagou 2017) – which originated with a British editorial unit working with the OWI's Publications Division. The digests were edited jointly by Americans, British, and in most cases representatives of the targeted nation. In the OWI's own estimation, the value of these publications was in 'impressing their readers with the global nature of the war, stressing the harmony of the United Nations toward victory, and acquainting the European peoples to the customs, culture and basic democratic principles of the United States' (OWI 1944, 16). The promotional language was a preview of US public diplomacy during the Cold War, including what it omitted, namely issues surrounding race and class conflict in the United States.

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Here the Cold War's emphasis on advertising the American lifestyle was most succinctly previewed. As Roholl (2012) notes, most studies of American cultural diplomacy trace its origins to the years following the Second World War and the establishment of the USIA. However, American psychological warfare during the Second World War prefigured this period and in many cases created the political and economic infrastructure for it. In publishing especially, the OWI attempted to reach *specific* audiences. As part of its long-range operational plan for Holland, for example, the OWI targeted middlebrow audiences with a magazine called *An American Review*, with which it attempted to convince the Dutch that 'America does not only fight or work or eat or amuse itself, but America *thinks*'.

The subject of women and their role in the post-war world was an especially important subject of OWI publications. In the Netherlands, for example, the OWI published an eighty-page glossy magazine titled *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* (The American woman) that attempted to illustrate the United States' attitude towards women during and after the war. 'American attitudes toward women' reflected anthropological research conducted for the OWI by Ruth Benedict and other social scientists who had identified the Netherlands, along with Spain, Portugal, and Italy, as holding 'conservative values toward women'. While the more liberal *Kijk* presented photo essays of American women at work in the mould of Rosie the Riveter, the conservative *Amerikaansche Vrouw* turned its focus towards the post-war world, emphasising the exceptionality and temporary nature of women's war work. In place of heavy industry, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* portrayed women workers with manicured nails and lipstick operating smaller machines comparable to the home appliance consumer goods which underwrote the OWI's representation of the consumer-focused 'American way of life'. These portrayals of re-feminised American women were meant to assuage the fears of conservatives, identified by Ruth Benedict and others, that the American way of life presented a threat to traditional gender roles. Against this perception, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* pictured middle-class, small-town idylls in which women had been returned to their 'natural' place in the home as domestic workers and consumers of a new suite of household consumer goods and appliances, which OWI publications advertised prodigiously.

Conversely, when it suited the target audience, the OWI portrayed the United States as liberal and progressive. As remained the case into the Cold War, race relations in the United States had been a target of anti-American propaganda during the Second World War, with the continued oppression of black Americans undermining the United States' rhetoric about the 'freedom and dignity' of all people. Even in the US Army, black Americans largely served in segregated units, and representations of black Americans were almost entirely absent from general OWI publications such as *Victory* magazine, and especially from publications aimed at conservative audiences, such as *De Amerikaansche*

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Vrouw. In the Netherlands, *Kijk* did attempt to address race relations in the United States, though coverage was relegated to the magazine's 'cultural' pages, which focused mostly on jazz and theatre, prefiguring the exploitation of black American culture as a staple of US Cold War public diplomacy (Davenport 2009). A two-page profile of Paul Robeson in *Kijk* was emblematic, celebrating Robeson's rise to fame as an embodiment of the 'American dream' of social mobility, while folding Robeson's civil rights political advocacy into larger OWI narratives on 'The Four Freedoms' (Amana 2004). Perhaps ironically, during the Cold War Robeson was blacklisted in the United States for his support of the American Communist Party.

Finally, the United States' 'arsenal for democracy' was an important theme of the OWI's Publications Division in Europe. Though popularised by Roosevelt's 'fireside chats' in 1940, and originally meant to denote the United States' industrial capacity for armament, the OWI abstracted American industrial power and, while never relinquishing the military frame, presented commercial industrial production as a cipher for American democracy. This emphasis on mass industrial production, however, again unsettled quarters of European conservatism, whose naturalistic worldview chafed at the image of American wartime industry in which towering machines dwarfed the human. Against the malaise of a dialectic of enlightenment, OWI publications in Europe attempted to frame the coming American century as a 'people's capitalism', a phrase coined by the USIA in the 1950s but prefigured by the OWI's rhetorical construction of the 'arsenal for democracy' in which 'production once used to save democracy [will] serve the democracy of consumption' – a democracy in which 'the machine no longer dominates, rather the consumer takes centre stage' (Roholl 2012, 11).[7] As Victoria de Grazia (2005, 11) observes, 'the OWI composed a picture of America that systematically underrepresented city life and boomtowns, minorities and more, while over representing small-town America and all it stands for'. Above all, however, OWI publications 'offered the world the keys to a consumer society based on mass production, mass marketing, and labour saving devices'.

More than favouring a particular liberal or conservative vision of the postwar socio-cultural order, US psychological warfare tailored its output to the specifics of the time, place, and people it addressed. What was constant was a vision of a US-led international order based on free markets, consumption, and consumer lifestyles. In this way, US psychological warfare created the conditions for its own flourishing: in opening up international markets to US

[7] Modernisation theorists of the 1950s, many of whom were psychological warriors in the Second World War, also placed a near ontological significance on consumer goods as weapons of psychological war. Consider, for example, Daniel Lerner's (1958) 'parable of the grocer' in which the vision of a 'real grocery' store becomes, in his estimation, a vector of 'psychic modernization'. For Lerner, the commodity itself is a powerful talisman for the psychological warrior.

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media products, the United States both strengthened the primacy of market-based communication in Europe and established itself as the leader in those markets. Though in the early years of the war, the United States 'strategy of truth' may have disavowed the language of geopolitics, in practice the OWI pursued a deeply territorial strategy based on military occupation, establishing permanent information outposts, circulating information, and collecting intelligence on local affairs.

Psychological war and the politics of terror

When Edmond Taylor's *The Strategy of Terror* introduced psychological warfare to the US public in 1940, the question of terror was not limited to purely communicative media such as radio, newspapers, and leaflets. Indeed, the political imaginary of psychological warfare built directly on the so-called war of nerves, a phrase popularised during the Spanish Civil War denoting public fears over the bombing of civilian populations. Generally credited as the first American verse radio play, Archibald McLeish's *The Fall of the City* (1937) dramatised the rise of fascism in Europe, highlighting the significance played by terror and mass panic. The following year, McLeish wrote *Air Raid*, another radio play dramatising civilian bombing as a psychological strategy of terror. In Britain, author and journalist John Langdon-Davies (1938, 82) spelled out the psychological dimension of terror bombing, claiming that civilian populations 'can best be immobilized – that is irrationalized – by suspense. There is no need to smash them physically; instead they must be dislocated psychologically, and then they become more useful to the enemy alive than dead.'[8]

In this political imagination, bombing was not only a destructive act, but also a *productive* one. The production of terror, panic, or 'psychological dislocation' was seen as a resource that military planners could utilise in strategic planning. Though in the years before the Pearl Harbor attacks, the United States vocally denounced the bombing of civilian populations, US Air Corp doctrine dating back to 1926 suggested a similar belief in bombing as a 'method of imposing will by terrorizing the whole population while preserving life and property' (Sherry 1987, 57).[9] With US entry into the Second World War, American war planners abandoned their condemnations of civilian bombing to embrace practices of strategic and area bombing (see Gregory 2011b, 2011c). Here, too, psychologists contributed to the intellectual underpinning of US bombing. In a May 1942 issue of the *Journal of*

[8] Though outside the scope of this book, psychological warfare's special relationship to bombing can be traced back to British strategies of colonial 'air policing'. See Sleeper (1952), Neocleous (2013), and Gregory (2017b).

[9] Though the military logic of terror is of course much older. See Gregory (2012) for a discussion of General Order 100 during the American Civil War.

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Consulting Psychology, J. G. Watkins (1942, 119) urged that 'clinical psychologists and psychiatrists could combine their knowledge of human instabilities to increase the harmful effects on the more unstable enemy worker. Habits of sleep', he continued, 'could be so consistently disturbed as to increase fatigue and irritability. This means *psychological* as well as military planning of air raids' (emphasis mine).

Thus, when Allied commanders began their campaign of 'round-the-clock bombing' in Europe, they found in the new concept of 'civilian morale' a ready-made concept backed up by the authority of social scientists. If Gordon Allport had been instrumental in the articulation of the concept of 'national morale', in 1944 he was again called upon to theorise the effect of civilian bombing on national morale. As Hoffman (1992, 270) shows, the US Strategic Bombing Survey, though generally making little use of consultants, asked Gordon Allport in late 1944 to 'assemble "a priori analysis" from psychologists on the probable effects of strategic bombing upon civilian morale in enemy countries'. Allport contacted colleagues from his 1940–1 Harvard morale seminars, enclosing a list of questions about bombing on which they could speculate. Allport told them he was willing to accept the results of 'an evening's discussion with a seminar group' or 'a more informal chat with colleagues' (as cited in Hoffman 1992, 270). More conjecture than rigour, the episode illustrated the extent to which US bombing was underwritten by social scientific authorities eager to support the war effort.

While retrospective treatments of US strategic bombing generally concede that enemy morale was if anything strengthened by the Allied bombing campaign (US Strategic Bombing Survey 1947), similar insights were also readily available at the time. As S. S. Sargent (1942, 168) noted in the SPSSI's yearbook on *Civilian Morale*, German bombing raids 'did wonders for British morale'. Similarly, he continued,

> invasion of her frontiers and the German approach to Moscow raised Russian morale to unexpected heights. American morale, confused and divided at the time, was welded and galvanized into action by the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Despite the knowledge that bombing would have such a 'galvanising' effect on German morale, psychologists endorsed the practice of 'morale bombing', providing a scientistic gloss to the once abhorrent practice of terror bombing. As Watkins (1943, 135, 138) wrote in the *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, psychologists 'must now comb all literature available to us with the object in mind of determining the factors which are "destructive" of human well-being and efficiency'. Though Watkins equivocated that 'we hesitate to use the strategy of terror on our enemies', he concluded that,

> yes, psychological warfare can multiply the damage wrecked [*sic*] on the enemy war effort over that accomplished by bombs alone … The greatest total damage, psychological as well as physical, must be the objective in all air raids, and our military leaders should be urged to consider psychological damage in the same serious light as physical damage.

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While bombing itself often served as a kind of psychological war against civilian populations, conventional communication media also served to provide context and justification for bombing operations. In an effort to ensure that bombing did not remain an 'unexplained ultimatum' (Sleeper 1952) to its victims, US psychological warriors often worked to make bombing socially legible, emphasising its coercive purpose while also providing it with a humanitarian gloss. A typical radio broadcast to German civilians on 12 September 1944 illustrates the OWI's (1944, 8) act of balancing the terror of bombing against psychological warfare's moral economy. 'The areas in which you live are already today in the rear area of military operations', sounded the OWI broadcast:

> Very soon they may become a theatre of war. In view of these facts I am giving you the following warning: the rear communications of the remnants of the German Army retreating into Germany will be subjected to bombing as devastating as that which preceded and accompanied the Allied campaign in Normandy. Civilians are hereby warned that everyone who lives or works in the vicinity of road, railroad and canal communications; of military depots, camps and installations; or factories working for the Nazi war machine, must from now on reckon that they will not be saved from high level or low-level air attack at any hour of the day or night.

Though ostensibly a humanitarian gesture to inform Germans of impending airstrikes, the broadcasts in practice had the effect of creating 'fair warning', transforming Germany's civilian population into legitimate airstrike targets. Significantly, the 'warning appeal' was broadcast in multiple languages over the powerful ABSIE, suggesting that German audiences, to whom the broadcasts were ostensibly addressed, were in fact only one of the intended audiences. In Allied countries, the news that German civilians would soon be subject to high-level air attacks could serve as a morale-building exercise, while in the Soviet Union the broadcasts illustrated the United States' military capacity and its willingness to use it against civilian populations. In all cases, not only was bombing itself understood as a medium of psychological war, but also psychological warfare was understood as a way to make bombing socially legible to multiple target audiences.

If Judith Butler (1994) has observed that US bombing campaigns appear as 'acts of law' that substitute 'ordnance for ordinance', belief in the power of bombing to assert a form of governmental power over enemy populations has roots in the special relationship forged between bombing and psychological warfare in the theatres of the Second World War. As James Gibson (1986) suggests in his study of the Vietnam War, US commanders understood bombing itself to be a communicative act to both political leaders and civilian populations. However, in the political imagination of psychological war, the reverse is also true: communication itself is reimagined as an act of bombardment. As innovations such as the 'leaflet bomb' illustrate, the ordinance of psychological war often quite literally took the form of military ordnance. Indeed, the ballistic metaphor was foundational to the early theorists of psychological war. As Wilbur Schramm (1953, 8) argued after the war,

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> the reason for speaking of [psychological warfare] as an application of science you will grasp at once from what it has in common with another area of military study, namely, ballistics. Ballistics is the specialized study of those physical laws that relate to the firing of weapons … and just as ballistics depends on the physical sciences, psywar depends on what we may call the 'human sciences'.

As the British psychological warrior Wallace Carroll (1948, 374) noted after the war, this relationship was implicit and intuitive to its wartime practitioners. 'The function of propaganda', he recalled, 'was roughly comparable to the function of the Allied air forces – to soften up the Germans before the American and British troops moved across the Channel.'

Unlike the consolidation propaganda meant for pacifying populations behind the advancing Allied front, offensive psychological warfare, like bombing, was meant to reach otherwise inaccessible people and places beyond enemy lines. France was an especially contested zone for US psychological warriors. By the end of 1942 the first American news-sheet – a 5¼ × 8½ in paper called *L'Amerique en Guerre* – was dropped at a rate of roughly 300,000 copies per week over the Paris, Lyon, and Rouen regions.

Taking the form of 'straight news' after the 'strategy of truth', US newspaper leaflets accentuated and dramatised bombing campaigns against German targets. Figure 2.9 shows a dramatic top-sighted (Gregory 2011b) view of the so-called dambuster raid on the Ruhr in which the British Air Force's destruction of a dam at Mohne caused massive flooding of the region's industrial and civilian areas. Though Allied bombing raids were often justified as 'attacking German morale', the OWI was at pains to use bombing raids as morale builders in Allied and contested regions (Figures 2.10 and 2.11). As with its 'warning appeals', a key function of American psychological warfare was to make clear to enemies and allies alike the United States' capacity and willingness to bomb civilian populations.

The OWI's role in advertising the destructive capacity and intent of Allied air power against civilian targets, though sometimes couched in terms of 'industrial targets' and preceded by apparent warning appeals, illustrates the extent to which Allied psychological warfare had become the strategy of terror so emphatically disavowed in the months before US entry into the war. Psychological warfare therefore worked to make the terror of bombing socially legible and politically leverageable. Bombing had become for Allied psychological warriors a kind of 'propaganda of the deed', a demonstration of the so-called arsenal for democracy 'in ways beyond the force of words' (Carroll, 1948, 374).

Wo ist der Luftwaffe? Operation Pointblank

In advance of the Normandy landings, Allied commanders feared that a strong Luftwaffe would frustrate a European invasion and had therefore undertaken to

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L'Amérique en Guerre

LE 19 MAI 1943 No. 49

TUNISIE – le commencement de la fin

NOTRE VICTOIRE EST COMPLETE

(De notre correspondant particulier)

Le Déluge

La barrage de la Mohne, après l'attaque dévastatrice de la R.A.F., par une brèche de 100 mètres de large se précipitent les eaux du réservoir, entraînant dans leur course terrifiante une centrale électrique et des maisons. Les régions blanches, sur les bords boisés du réservoir, sont la boue et le sable laissés à découvert par les eaux qui se sont retirées.

Tunis, 18 mai.—La victoire de Tunisie est la plus complète, la plus décisive, la plus satisfaisante qui ait été remportée par les Nations Unies. Elle est, à la fois, une victoire stratégique, une victoire tactique, une victoire morale. Elle a fait ressortir, sous un jour éclatant, la supériorité alliée dans la conception aussi bien que dans l'exécution.

Mais surtout, pour la première fois dans l'histoire de cette guerre, elle comporte un élément capital, lourd de conséquences : l'effondrement total d'une puissante armée allemande. Pour la première fois depuis 1918, un groupe de divisions nazies en parfaite forme physique, endurcies au combat africain, dotées d'immenses réserves de matériel et de stocks considérables de ravitaillement, et appuyées à des bases puissamment armées et bétonnés, pourvues de communications aussi courtes que faciles, à l'intérieur desquelles les routes et les champs étaient parsemés de dépôts de munitions et de stocks d'essence, ce groupe de divisions a capitulé sans chercher à utiliser sa force. Il n'a pas su réagir contre l'effet de surprise d'une manœuvre stratégique hardie, brillamment exécutée. Généraux en tête, les troupes allemandes se sont rendues en masse, le sourire aux lèvres. C'était la meilleure nouvelle que l'Europe opprimée pût recevoir à l'orée de l'été 1943.

Arnim, et Goebbels après lui, mentent délibérément. Dans leur avance fulgurante, les divisions blindées, motorisées et montées des armées française, britannique et américaine pénétrant comme des couteaux à travers des mottes de beurre, ont saisi, intacts, des stocks gigantesques de matériel de guerre. Le démembrement n'en est pas encore terminé. Mais quelques exemples éclaireront l'étendue du désastre moral subi par le Reich nazi :

— A quelques kilomètres de Bizerte, sur une route engorgée de prisonniers parmi lesquels des officiers allemands de chars disaient : "Nous nous rendons parce que nous n'avons plus rien pour nous battre." les Alliés ont pris, intact, un dépôt d'essence contenant, en fûts de 50 litres, 4 millions de litres, et intact, un un dépôt de munitions contenant 5 millions d'obus pour canons de chars.

— Aux portes de Tunis, les Français ont fait prisonniers, vers 16 heures le 12 mai, 25.000 Allemands qui disaient : "On ne peut pas se battre sans manger". A 3 kilomètres de là, ils ont occupé un parc de l'Intendance où Arnim avait fait stocker 1 million de rations individuelles. De quoi manger pour : 1 million d'hommes pendant 24 heures, 500.000 hommes pendant deux jours, 250.000 hommes pendant quatre jours.

— Le premier dénombrement du butin saisi dans la péninsule

(Suite à la page 2)

La Ruhr sous les flots

Londres, 18 mai.—La nuit dernière, des bombardiers britanniques ont détruit 2 grands barrages sur les rivières Mohne et Eder, dans la Ruhr, au cours d'un raid audacieux. Audacieux, certes, mais aussi projeté et exécuté avec soin, car cette opération pourra bien avoir infligé à l'Allemagne industrielle son plus grand désastre de la guerre.

La formation de bombardiers Lancasters portait des mines puissantes et les équipages étaient composés d'hommes spécialement entraînés pour cette opération en particulier.

D'énormes brèches ouvertes dans les barrages ont occasionné une inondation gigantesque de plus de 3.000.000.000 de mètres cubes d'eau qui ont déferlé dans les vallées de la Ruhr et de l'Eder et qui priveront probablement cette région industrielle vitale de l'Allemagne d'eau et d'électricité.

Dans leur ruée hors des réservoirs, les eaux de l'inondation ont détruit des ponts, des usines, des centrales électriques et des lignes de communication.

L'inondation qui a résulté des dégâts causés au barrage de l'Eder est encore plus importante que celle de la vallée de la Ruhr, mais le pays est moins accidenté dans cette région et l'eau se répand sur une plus grande superficie.

Le Ministère de l'Air britannique a publié le communiqué suivant :

"Dans les premières heures de la matinée, un groupe de bombardiers Lancaster, commandé par le lieutenant-colonel G. P. Gibson, a attaqué au moyen de mines les barrages-réservoirs de la Mohne et de la Sorpe, qui commandent les deux tiers de la capacité d'emmagasinage d'eau du bassin de la Ruhr.

"Plus tard, des avions de reconnaissance ont constaté qu'une brèche d'une centaine de mètres de long avait été faite dans le barrage de la Mohne et que la centrale électrique établie en aval avait été emportée par le flot qui s'était déversé par la brèche.

"Le barrage de l'Eder, qui commande les eaux d'alimentation des vallées de la Weser et de la Fulda et actionne plusieurs centrales électriques, a également été attaqué et une brèche y a été ouverte.

(Suite à la page 3)

USP 41.

Figure 2.9 *L'Amerique en Guerre*: American newspaper dropped over occupied France, May 1943 (OWI 1943b)

weaken the Luftwaffe through long-range bombing sorties into German territory. While Allied bombers had taken heavy losses to German fighters and air defences in late 1943, between January 1944 and the D-Day landings in June long-range fighters escorting Allied bombers to Germany had turned the tables, with the balance of aircraft losses accruing on the German side. In addition to destroying German industrial capacity, the Allies therefore saw their advantage in engaging

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Figure 2.10 'Fortress Europe has no roof': British and American leaflets advertised the scale of Allied bombing in Germany, to both Germany and France (OWI 1943c)

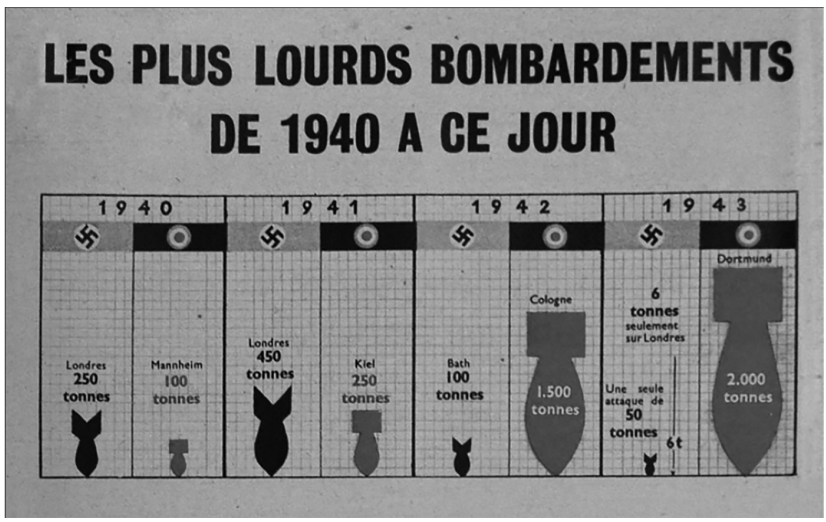

Figure 2.11 'The heaviest bombing to date': British and American leaflets advertised the scale of Allied bombing in Germany, to both Germany and France (OWI 1943d)

the Luftwaffe in air skirmishes on favourable terms, such that Germany's air power could be diminished in advance of the Allied landings in Normandy.

While Allied bombing raids were designed, in the words of the RAF's Arthur Harris, for the purpose of 'the destruction of German cities, the killing of German

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workers, and the disruption of civilized life' (cited in Garrett 1993, 33), Allied air commanders also believed that bomber sorties could goad Luftwaffe fighters into unfavourable air battles and attritional losses. By the spring of 1944, however, the Luftwaffe often declined to fly intercept sorties, electing to conserve fighters instead of sending them to likely destruction. The Luftwaffe's unwillingness to engage Allied fighters thus became a problem that the psychological warriors at the OWI needed to address.

The question of 'where is the Luftwaffe' had already been asked by American psychological warriors in leaflets dropped on German troops during the Italian campaign. Indeed, the very act of leaflet drops communicated to German soldiers the fact of Allied air superiority and their vulnerability to air attack (Pinkerton *et al*. 2011). The rhetorical question of 'where is the Luftwaffe' was thus meant to 'play on [the] resentments and anxieties' of Italian and German soldiers for whom no air support was available. Under Wallace Carroll's direction in the spring of 1944, the OWI reprised the theme, with leaflet drops and radio broadcasts to Germany conveying a kind of mock surprise that the Luftwaffe would 'allow' Allied bombing raids to advance deep into German territory largely unopposed.

OWI monitoring reports of German communications claimed that 'the mystery of the whereabouts of the Luftwaffe is one of the most burning questions among the soldiers' and that 'the subject of home-front bombardment is the most vulnerable point in the soldiers' morale' (Carroll 1948, 375–7). Instead of attempting directly to manipulate German war planners into air combat, the OWI strategy was to escalate and exploit the bombing of German civilians to 'stimulate public anxiety and criticism to such an extent that the German leaders would have to send the Luftwaffe into battle'. 'In the language of the track', wrote Carroll,

> we were betting across the board – win, show, or place – What we wanted most of all was to make the Luftwaffe come up and fight, so that the Allied air forces could destroy it in the air. But what if it declined to come up and fight? Then we would still get return on our stake, because we would make the German civilians and soldiers on the ground even more anxious and resentful than before over its failure to defend them.

As Carroll recalls, the OWI's strategy was to present the news to German audiences in a detached, neutral, 'strictly deadpan' manner with 'no obvious taunting or irony at the start'. On a day when American bombers met little or no opposition from the Luftwaffe, the OWI would simply report the fact with an air of puzzlement. A typical OWI news story read:

> It looks like the Luftwaffe has decided that the Germans on the ground must bear the brunt of the air war. If this is actually the Luftwaffe's policy, it means that the Luftwaffe is balancing planes against factories and has decided to save *its* planes and let *Germany's* factories go. But this seems to be a very strange policy – if it is a policy.

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Variations on this theme were reiterated regardless of the amount of opposition faced. On one occasion when the Luftwaffe did fly fighters, the OWI reported to German audiences that 'although the Luftwaffe attacked fiercely, it did not put up sufficient strength to keep our planes from reaching the target or from bombing their objectives … We are still rather puzzled by the Luftwaffe's apparent policy of letting the Germans on the ground take the brunt of the war' (Carroll 1948, 377). A similar strategy accompanied Allied bombing raids against oil refineries and lines of communication in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, attacks that were designed to lure Luftwaffe planes away from the western front to defend Germany's assets in the Balkans. The bombings were also an effort to produce resentment against the Germans in the Balkan states by killing civilians and blaming the Luftwaffe alternately for its cowardice or its ineptitude.

As a microcosm, Operation Pointblank reflected the wider belief that psychological warfare could be used to persuade and indeed coerce foreign populations into action. As the name 'Pointblank' suggests, psychological warriors believed that coercive violence – the proverbial gun held to the head – could induce foreign populations to pressure or even take action against their government. In the case of Operation Pointblank, Allied psychological warriors attempted to produce civilian casualties as a lever against German military leaders. Though psychological warfare is often framed as an alternative to military violence, what in fact emerged from the United States' first psychological warfare operations was on the contrary a vision of psychological warfare that could refine the sociology of violence, exacerbate the panic and suffering of war, and leverage the killing of civilians against political leaders.

'For support not illumination'

At the same time as Operation Pointblank launched its 'where is the Luftwaffe' campaign in the spring of 1944, the OWI was preparing to support the planned air and ground assault of Japan. As in Germany, Allied commanders believed that bombing could create a line of communication to the people of Japan. While bombing in Germany appeared as a kind of liberal governmentality – that is, a strategy to influence and coerce essentially rational actors – different assumptions prevailed when it came to conceptualising the Japanese people. Claims about the 'enigmatic' nature of the Japanese people reflected deep currents of prejudice and orientalist thought among US military planners, who often saw the Japanese people as fundamentally non-rational actors. If US military planners saw the German people as 'mad' or 'corrupted by fascism', an underlying assumption remained that, as Western 'Judeo-Christian subjects', Germans were nevertheless capable of rational thought and therefore fundamentally governable.

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Notable figures such as Potsdam Proclamation drafter Eugene Dooman challenged this orientalist view of Japanese society. As Dooman argued, 'many Japanese have a fairly rational point of view concerning the origin of the Japanese people and the Imperial family'. Against conventional wisdom, Dooman complained that many in US government were 'clothing the problem of Japanese mass psychology in mysticism' (cited in Sherry 1987, 247). Nevertheless, orientalist views of Japanese culture often came from ostensible experts, such as psychological warfare luminary Ellis Zacharias, who held that Japan's highly rigid and disciplined society would never surrender to Allied forces. Perhaps ironically, these beliefs were in part conditioned by Japan's *own* propaganda, which sought to convince its enemies and citizens alike that Japanese morale was 'invincible'.

The US perception of Japanese fanaticism persisted even against contradictory Army intelligence reports observing that, for example, Japanese troops *had* surrendered during the Russo-Japanese War when faced with impossible odds. Despite such knowledge to the contrary, the picture of the Japanese individual as fundamentally irrational nevertheless served an important rhetorical function in the planning and execution of bombing raids against Japan. On this account the case of the OWI's Foreign Morale Analysis Division (FMAD) in Japan is instructive. In advance of the American invasions of the Japanese homeland, FMAD had been organised to discover what psychological war problems could be 'illuminated by the application of social science methods and procedures' (Daugherty & Janowitz 1958, 214, 215). One question which morale analysis set out to answer in Japan was whether or not the 'picture of uniformly high and impregnable morale was a true one'. It was hoped that answering the question would produce insights concerning the Japanese character, which 'appeared so baffling and incomprehensible to the Western mind'.

Heading OWI's FMAD was Alexander Leighton, a sociologist whose 1949 *Human Relations in a Changing World* reflected on his experience with the OWI in the Pacific theatre. Leighton's qualification for the job rested primarily on his work directing a social research programme on Japanese Americans interned at so-called relocation centres in the United States. Despite or perhaps because of his involvement in the internment programme, Leighton published an article in *Time* magazine titled 'Japs Are Human' in which he recounted his experience that 'many Americans simply fail[ed] to remember that the Japanese are human beings'.

As Leighton (1949, 58) recalled after the war, among American policymakers, the opinion prevailed that Japanese civilian morale was 'for all practical purposes indestructible', and that 'the stereotype of fanatical and suicidal resistance hung like a spectre over planning and discussion'. In Leighton's FMAD, however, a different picture had emerged. Through various sources including radio monitoring, captured documents, personal diaries, and prisoner interrogation, Leighton's office determined that over the course of 1944 Japanese civilians had in fact been worn

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down by privation, 'physical discomfort', and news of Allied victories in Europe. FMAD had determined that factions of the Japanese population – notably students, factory workers, and Christians – were being scapegoated for the failing war effort, and that turnover had increased at the top of Japan's political structures. By January 1945, Leighton (1949, 59) had prepared a report to senior OWI officials challenging the received wisdom that Japanese morale was 'invincible' and 'impregnable'.

In abridged form, FMAD concluded that

1. A significant number of Japanese think the Allies will win and are consequently disposed to pay attention to what we tell them.
2. There is widespread apathy toward the war effort.
3. There is a great fear of what Americans will do when they land. It is therefore important to reassure the Japanese and try to prevent them fighting vigorously from terror.

In contrast to the 'fanatical and suicidal' resolve policymakers assumed Japanese civilians to possess, FMAD suggested that war scepticism was prevalent in Japan and that conditions were ripe for surrender, though fear of punitive action might actually *protract* the war. These findings, however, were met with hostility from top OWI officials, who remained committed to the myth of invincible Japanese morale. As Leighton recalled, the report had 'little effect except to anger some of those responsible for planning the OWI directives'. Subsequent FMAD reports were similarly met with hostility by OWI leadership, such that by the end of 1945 Leighton believed that the 'OWI and other policy makers were working in terms of a largely false picture of the [Japanese] home front'. In May 1945, the director of the OWI's Japan Section became enraged at Leighton's reports, demanding that further morale analysis be 'toned down' in its assessment of flagging Japanese morale (Figure 2.12).

The OWI's rejection of its own morale analysis research was indicative of its commitment to psychological warfare not as a lever of diplomacy, but as an adjunct of kinetic military operations. While research suggested that Japanese civilians might be receptive to a political resolution, the OWI rejected these findings and tailored its output to support the planned large-scale bombing of Japanese cities that Leighton's research suggested would likely *prolong* the war by worsening Japanese apprehension concerning a punitive American occupation. With the capture of Saipan in May 1945, however, US military commanders had committed to a strategy of aerial bombing that control over the island enabled. The episode led Leighton to conclude bitterly that 'the administrator uses social science the way a drunk uses a lamppost, for support rather than illumination'.

Among the social scientists willing to lend support to military planners was Leighton's OWI colleague Clyde Kluckhohn, an anthropologist whose conclusions about 'Japanese character' offered full-throated support for US bombing. Unlike Leighton, Kluckhohn based his support for US bombing on the presumption of the Japanese individual's 'non-rationality'. Remarkably, Kluckhohn (1949, 115) clothed his orientalism in the mantle of progressive social values, arguing

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Figure 2.12 Post-war US Army (1946) 'newsmap'

that the United States should not wage war based 'on a cultural imperialism that insists upon the substitution of our institutions for theirs'. It was the role of the anthropologist, Kluckhohn argued, to 'prevent his [sic] colleagues from casting both enemies and allies in the American image, and [remind] intellectuals of the significance of the non-rational'. For Kluckhohn, rationality remained the province of Europeans and their descendants, while cultural sensitivity demanded the appreciation of the Japanese individual's fundamental non-rationality. Elaborating a theory of Japanese quasi-humanity, Kluckhohn (1949, 116) observed that

> [a]n American prisoner of war still felt himself to be an American and looked forward to resuming his normal place in American society after the war. A Japanese prisoner, however, conceived of himself as *socially dead*. He regarded his relations with his family, his friends, and his country as finished. But since he was still physically alive he wished to affiliate himself with a new society. To the astonishment of their American captors, many Japanese prisoners wished to join the American Army. (emphasis mine)

Articulating a kind of de-anthropology in which the Japanese *Homo sacer* (Agamben 1998) undergoes a social death through which the body lives, Kluckhohn constructed a picture of Japanese civilians as less than human. Though a remarkable conceit, Kluckhohn's belief in the ability of US foreign policy to de- and re-construct non-Western subjects in the 1950s came to form a centrepiece of

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US modernisation theory, a school of thought deeply informed by the experience of US psychological warfare in Germany and Japan. Concluding his anecdote, Kluckhohn argued that

> the behavior before and after capture was utterly incongruous. The incongruity, however, rests on a cultural point. The Judaic-Christian tradition is that of absolute morality … To anthropologists who had steeped themselves in Japanese literature it was clear that Japanese morality was a situational one. As long as one was in situation A, one publicly observed the rules of the game with a fervor that impressed Americans as 'fanaticism'. Yet, the minute one was in situation B, the rules of situation A no longer applied.

The belief that individuals outside of a supposed 'Judeo-Christian' tradition possessed a less stable sense of self and morality animated the conceit that non-Western subjects were essentially malleable and could be shaped by US psychological warriors. Psychological warriors such as Kluckhohn thus began with a false impression of the Japanese people – that they were irrational, fanatical, yet inherently malleable – and from this position lent professional, ideological, and moral support to the US programme of bombing. Though Leighton's FMAD had shown that Japanese morale was in fact precipitously low, belief that it was nigh on 'impregnable' underwrote the moral and strategic justification of large-scale urban bombing. Perhaps ironically, the OWI's refusal to acknowledge the real state of Japanese morale allowed for Kluckhohn (1949, 117) to question whether Japanese morale 'was or could be absolutely impregnable' after all. Wrongly holding Japanese morale to be a kind of unbreachable fortress, Kluckhohn argued that anthropologists could help the military find 'the right means for widening the cracks and fissures' in Japanese morale. The means turned out to be a programme of brutal and sustained bombing of Japanese cities.

In addition to questions concerning their presumed irrationality and invincible morale, the bombing of Japanese civilians was also morally rationalised with broader assumptions about their inherently cruel and treacherous nature. Films such as *The Sands of Iwo Jima* and Walt Disney's *Victory through Airpower* supplied these frames in US popular culture, while social scientists also lent their authority to them. The work of Committee for National Morale member Geoffrey Gorer is particularly notable for its attempt to discover the origins of Japan's 'cruelty and sadism' in Japanese childrearing practices. Though long discredited, Gorer's writing nevertheless begged questions concerning the 'brutality' of the Japanese character, a trait Gorer bizarrely attributed to the supposed idiosyncrasies of Japanese toilet training – a theory even Kluckhohn mocked as the 'Scott Tissue interpretation of history' (Moberg 2012, 174). Though risible, Gorer's theory reflected the emergent ethos of US psychological warfare in which social science could be applied to populations in the form of military operations.

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Central to what Derek Gregory (2017b) has called the 'moral economy of bombing' is the idea that bombing embodies a kind of *lawfulness*, not only in the sense of its legality, but also in bombing's ability to 'impose law on the lawless'. In posing the Japanese people as irrational, fanatical, and outside the 'Judeo-Christian tradition', US psychological warriors conceived of bombing as a way to rationalise, pacify, and impose order on foreign populations. As Weinman (2017, n.p.) suggests, the significance of the American model of 'ordnance as ordinance' is that '"we" publicly declare the ordinance that those who defy international law will be vanquished by the synthesis of law and force executed by the United States military'. More than just framing the victims of US bombing as disordered Others, bombing here provides a dialectics of encounter for the realisation of the United States' 'Judeo-Christian tradition'. This vision, as Weinman continues,

> remains the reigning principle behind the self-image of the United States as an actor on the international scene. And this is so because, deeply steeped in an 'Old Testament morality', this vision justifies a view of America as the model exemplar of a 'Judeo-Christian' civilization. A civilization that is – as it ever was – waging a war, engaging in a 'clash of civilizations'.

The fantastical notion of Japan's 'invincible morale' therefore served as a moral justification for a campaign of massive aerial bombardment imagined as a process of imposing law on the lawless – of producing rational subjects through violent stimulus. Despite the refrain that psychological warfare could save lives, shorten the war, and provide an alternative to Hitler's 'strategy of terror', US psychological warfare in Japan crystallised around the administration of violence, bridging a broader colonial history that continued to use the global South as a laboratory for weapons testing and demonstration (Beauchamp 2017).

When Allied forces captured the island of Saipan off the coast of mainland Japan in May 1945, the US Air Force gained a new foothold from which to launch air raids against Japanese cities. Before the capture of Saipan, psychological war leaflets were infrequently dropped in Japan due to the distance and difficulty of getting them there. With the capture of Saipan, however, the OWI initiated a new psychological war strategy to test-drop leaflets *in advance* of bombing raids instead of concurrently with them. The OWI strategy attempted to maximise the terror of bombing raids by distributing leaflets which informed civilians that their city had been marked for destruction by the US Air Force. By distributing leaflets in advance, OWI psychological warriors worked to further the translation of ordnance to ordinance in the form of the 'directive leaflet' issuing commands to target populations.

Among its first 'directive leaflets' in advance of firebombing campaigns in late July 1945 was a leaflet that instructed Japanese civilians to undertake the unlikely task of 'overthrowing [its] military government'. Perhaps more than an earnest expectation that the leaflet would produce a political revolution, the leaflets were an exercise in making the practice of bombing socially legible. 'These leaflets are

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being dropped to notify you that your city has been listed for destruction by our powerful air force', began the leaflet:

> The bombing will begin in 72 hours. The advance notice will give your military authorities ample time to take necessary defensive measures to protect you from our inevitable attack. Watch and see how powerless they are to protect you. We give the military clique this notification because we know there is nothing they can do to stop our overwhelming power and our iron determination. We want you to see how powerless the military is to protect you. Systematic destruction of city after city will continue as long as you blindly follow your military leaders whose blunders have placed you on the very brink of oblivion. It is your responsibility to overthrow the military government now and save what is left of your beautiful country. (Friedman n.d.f)

Like Operation Pointblank, psychological warfare in Japan materialised around the power of bombing to render civilian populations helpless against death and destruction. As American Lt. Colonel J. W. Greene put it,

> the new warning program is part of the truth campaign started by the branch some time ago … Furthermore, the appearance of the leaflets, followed by a raid in force, in each case in clock-like regularity will demonstrate to the people of Japan that their army and navy air forces are impotent to stop us, even when they know exactly when and where we are coming. (Friedman n.d.f)

Significantly, the directive leaflet is here imagined as an iteration of the United States' 'truth campaign', demonstrating the extent to which the OWI's 'strategy of truth' had departed from its earlier assurances that it would not use psychological war as a 'strategy of terror' (Figure 2.13). On the contrary, the OWI's actually

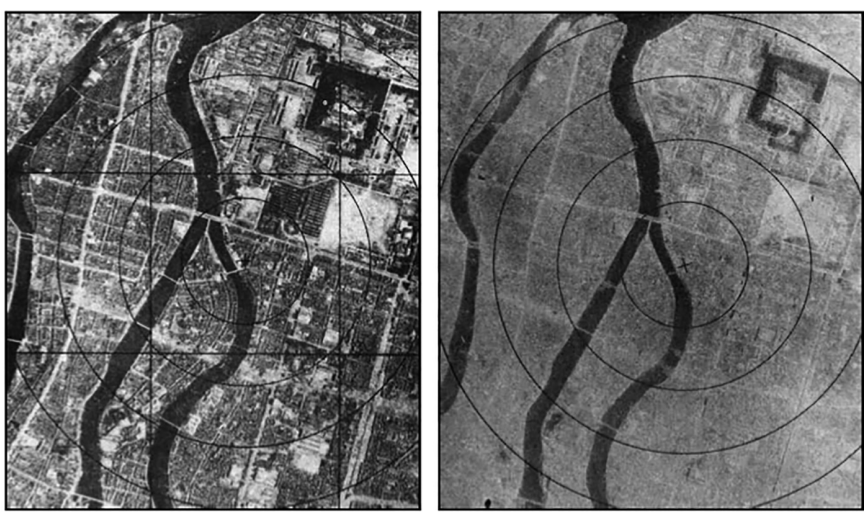

Figure 2.13 Hiroshima leaflet (Friedman n.d.f)

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existing psychological war fused strategies of truth and terror by narrating the reality of American air power to its victims and instructing them to witness it. Furthermore, US psychological warriors placed responsibility for the bombing onto its victims for 'continuing to blindly follow [their] military leaders'.

A leaflet dropped over twelve Japanese cities on 27 July 1945 continued the strategy of terror by listing each of the twelve cities, and warning that four of them would be destroyed the following day. The following night, *five* cities were in fact destroyed by firebombs: Tsu, Aomori, Ichinomiya, Ogaki, and Uwajima. Two days later, on 30 July 1945, a second leaflet naming twelve additional cities was dropped, followed by another still on 3 August 1945. Though the leaflets upheld what would become a staple of American psychological war strategy – that resistance to American military power ultimately made its victims responsible for their own deaths and injuries – they also displaced moral accountability by articulating the simultaneous yet contradictory theme of US military humanitarianism. If a central moral economic tenet of US bombing claims that bombing saves lives by shortening war (Gregory 2017b), a corollary tenet of psychological warfare's moral economy revolves around similar humanitarian claims. As the OWI's 3 August 1945 leaflet directed,

> read this carefully as it may save your life or the life of a relative or friend. In the next few days the military installations of some or all of the cities named on the reverse side will be destroyed by American bombs. These cities contain military installations and workshops or factories which produce military goods. We are determined to destroy all of the tools of the military clique which they are using to prolong this useless war. But, unfortunately, bombs have no eyes. So, in accordance with America's well-known humanitarian policies, the American Air Force which does not wish to injure innocent people, now gives you a warning to evacuate the cities named and save your lives. (Daugherty 1958b, 360)

Three days later the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Outwardly, the United States foregrounded the turmoil of balancing its 'well-known humanitarian policies' against its expressed goals of destroying industrial capacity. Inwardly, however, an express goal of the atomic bombing was, as Secretary of War Henry Stimson put it, 'to make a profound psychological impression on as many of the inhabitants as possible' (cited in Sherry 1987, 319). Similarly, the committee responsible for the selection of targets agreed that 'psychological factors in the target selection were of great importance'. Like other warning appeals, the 'psychological' audience for the atomic bomb was not contained to the Japanese but extended to a global audience. Its initial use was intended to be 'sufficiently spectacular for the importance of the weapon to be internationally recognized when publicity on it is released'. As with the previous selection of cities for firebombing, targeting often belied contradictory or inconsistent justification, as when cities with little industrial capacity were framed as 'industrial targets'. In 'civilian morale'

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and its presumed psychological corollaries, however, military planners wielded an unfalsifiable rationale in which, as Sherry (1987, 251) put it, 'intangible criteria invited unlimited destruction'.

Conclusion

By the end of the war, American psychological warfare had become the inverse image of that which it promised. In place of a 'strategy of truth' eschewing vulgar European geopolitics, territorial strategies for projecting political and economic power were institutionalised. In place of early condemnations of Germany's strategy of terror, the United States' own practices of systematic terror and destruction were solidified.

In this chapter, I have shown that the United States' construction of the so-called strategy of truth was accompanied by an increasing inward consensus among its practitioners that wartime exceptionalism required its contravention. Outlining debates between liberal 'strategists of truth' and those advocating 'relevant duplicity', I have argued that disagreements over the specifics of *how* propaganda should be conducted had the overall effect of enshrining a bipartisan consensus that a massive government information agency was necessary in the United States. I suggest that debates over the 'politics of truth' in the early 1940 reveal the enduring ideological structure of American psychological warfare, namely an outward insistence on an objective 'strategy of truth' accompanied by inward epistemological relativism. I argue that emphasis on the philosophical evaluation of propaganda, its status, and its meaning tends to obscure and distract from its material reality and reach.

Central to these constructions of wartime exceptionalism was the increasing application of a pathologising rhetoric to publics *qua* polities. I have argued that this pathologising rhetoric attempted to transform public perceptions of the public-as-polity into perceptions of public-as-population in need of *securitisation*. While the strategy of truth remained the outward face of American psychological warfare, its inward face subscribed to an ethos not of truth but of *health*, defined as the security of morale. Foreshadowing and combining with what Sherry (1987) has called American air power's 'rhetoric of technique', I have argued that the rhetoric of pathologisation sought to depoliticise the public-as-polity and transform them into abstract objects of administration and authority. In this formulation, health and security – not politics – were vital to the government of populations. To secure the morale of populations, psychological warriors pursued not a strategy of truth, but a strategy of selective circulation of information that sought to undermine public perceptions of government censorship which had dominated the propaganda strategies of the First World War. In place of concealing, psychological warfare was based on an ethos of *revelation*, however partial and contingent.

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While many of the tactical staples of psychological warfare's combat propaganda were innovated in the North African theatre of the Second World War, there is little evidence to suggest that leaflet drops, artillery shells, and loudspeaker addresses had an appreciable effect on Vichy morale or rates of defection. Behind advancing Allied lines, however, American psychological warfare worked tirelessly to irrigate the territory it occupied with American cultural commodities, especially film. Contrary to the anti-geopolitical imaginary of the strategy of truth, I have outlined the territorial strategy of American psychological warfare which sought not only to pacify populations behind its advancing lines, but also to open markets to American cultural products and to establish permanent bases as part of a global information programme which would eventually become the USIA. The OWI in particular pursued a strategy to project American political and economic power through the privatisation of the cultural industries in the countries in which it operated.

In addition to its articulation of truth and territory, US psychological warfare was intimately involved in its own terrifying strategy of air power. Though psychological warfare claimed to be a gentler, more humane form of warfighting, its primary function beyond the front was to make bombing socially legible, not only to its real and potential victims, but also to allies, neutrals, and future enemies alike. Though there are reasons to doubt its effect, psychological warfare sought to exert a kind of governmental power, an extension and refinement of the colonial practice of air policing which sought to administer military violence for the purpose of exerting power over subjugated populations. If psychological warfare entered the American lexicon in the terms of spiritual defence against foreign invasion, the experience of the Second World War solidified in the US political establishment the belief that it could wage its own spiritual war and expand the remit of its liberal governmentality.

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3

Covert Crusade

The conclusion of the Second World War left the United States with a massive global infrastructure for waging psychological warfare, both in its occupying forces and in its numerous Office of War Information (OWI) outposts. However, competition and conflict both within and between the Departments of State and the Army produced what Army historian Alfred Paddock (1973) has called 'crosscurrents of uncertainty and caution' over if, where, and how the United States should continue to wage psychological war in the future. Though the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the OWI were officially dissolved in September 1945, key personnel from these organisations continued to advocate for psychological war until the establishment of their respective successor agencies: the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1947 and the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1953. In the interim, struggles over psychological warfare between the Departments of State and the Army revolved around the related questions of whether or not the United States should wage psychological war in times of peace, and whether psychological war should be a civilian or military responsibility.

In this chapter, I show how these 'crosscurrents of uncertainty and caution' led to the assumption of responsibility for psychological warfare by the CIA in the years before the establishment of the USIA. I focus on the so-called Crusade for Freedom, in which the CIA covertly organised and funded an ostensibly private group of American citizens called the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE), which in turn waged a proxy psychological war against the Soviet Union through the establishment of Radio Free Europe, a radio station based in West Germany broadcasting to the Soviet satellite states. I draw particular attention to the way that Radio Free Europe's psychological war was predicated upon the Crusade for Freedom's appearance as an independent, citizen-run body. Central to the ruse was constructing the public perception that the Crusade was financed by and through the efforts of private, ordinary American citizens devoted to 'fighting for freedom' abroad. In examining the CIA's covert Crusade for Freedom within the United States, I argue that the geopolitical imaginary of psychological

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warfare that began in the summer of 1940 was increasingly tied to the personal responsibility of American individuals to wage it.

Uncertainty and caution

Central to the post-1945 psychological war landscape was the Allied occupation of Germany, Austria, Japan, and Korea. In charge of consolidation propaganda in occupied Germany was Major General Robert McClure, the 'forgotten father' of Army special and psychological warfare. Appointed by Dwight Eisenhower as head of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (PWD/SHAEF) in Europe in 1944, McClure's Psychological Warfare Division became the Information Control Division (ICD) in 1945 and was responsible for the 'de-nazification' of Germany by assuming total control over media production and distribution.

In what had become 'the biggest newspaper enterprise in the world', McClure described the scale of the ICD's control over Germany's communication systems in a 1946 letter to his friend and former psychological war deputy C. D. Jackson:

> We now control 37 newspapers, 6 radio stations, 314 theatres, 642 movies, 101 magazines, 237 book publishers, 7,384 book dealers and printers, and conduct about 15 public opinion surveys a month, as well as publish one newspaper with 1,500,000 circulation, 3 magazines, run the Associated Press of Germany (DANA), and operate 20 library centers … The job is tremendous. (Cited in Paddock 2018, n.p.)

The system of control was similar to that employed in Italy, beginning with a complete halt to domestic media production, the re-establishment of circulation under military control, and the gradual return of media production and circulation to German citizens under a strict and restrictive licensing system subsequent to extensive political and psychiatric vetting of editors (Levy 1947). As Daugherty and Janowitz (1958, 363) note, the 're-establishment of a democratic press' in Germany involved a contradictory state of political exception: 'in a basic sense', they write, 'it was a paradoxical objective since arbitrary and authoritarian means had to be employed in pursuit of democratic objectives'.

A working agreement between Elmer Davis at the OWI and McClure at the PWD/SHAEF, now the Information Control Division, ensured that policy for the German press was coordinated across the occupying authority. As Albert Norman (1951, 20) recounts, the ICD proceeded through three phases of curtailing, restoring, and managing the circulation of news in Germany:

> The first phase [of the reorientation policy] called for the total prohibition of German public education and cultural media; the second for the employment of official ('overt', as it was then called) American educational services and the simultaneous

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> searching out of anti-Nazi Germans who could be trusted to re-establish indigenous media under Military Government supervision; and the third phase, for the gradual transition to complete control of the cultural media by the Germans themselves, under the supervision of the Military Government authorities.

The final stage's 'supervision' entailed not only a discerning selection of editors, but also the creation of a punitive monitoring system which exerted control over the breadth of allowable debate. One measure of overt censorship involved a ban on criticism of the occupying authorities: 'such attacks were indeed contrary to directives, which stipulated that no attacks on settled military government policy would be printed'. In one case, an offending newspaper was ordered to reduce its issues from six to four pages for a month's time, while in another case editors were reprimanded and directed to stay within official guidelines. Despite the lack of a free press, Norman (1951, 41) happily concluded that 'all in all the German press could fairly be said to be moving toward becoming a free democratic organ'.

Editors selected by American occupying forces underwent thorough vetting, often more rigorous than that required for other fields of public life, indicating the esteem in which the power of the press was held. In order to qualify for a publishing licence, editors were required to undergo exhaustive field investigation, often with weeks-long psychiatric interviews to establish the candidates' political orientation and loyalty. Particular emphasis was placed upon prospective editors' willingness to comply with American requirements that a reconstructed German press follow the strictures of a 'non-political press'. Unlike the British and Soviet occupied zones, editors selected in the American zone curtailed the establishment of the party presses that had dominated the German news landscape before the war. While some critics saw the denial of the right of political parties to publish newspapers as a denial of the democratic process, Norman flatly asserted that 'most Germans approved of the non-party press and credited their newspapers with having remained impartial in discussing political problems' (Norman 1951, 40). Suggesting a bridging continuity with the OWI's ostensible 'strategy of truth', the emphasis on factual news was explicitly conceived in contrast to editorial, partisan, or advocacy-centred approaches to news production. As Norman (1951, 32) explained,

> the type of newspaper the American military government authorities wished to see the Germans introduce was one that emphasized straightforward news reporting, with emphasis on international rather than on provincial news. This would mean less editorializing and more factual news reporting of events. In pre-Hitler days it was the political editorial, not the current news, which received the major emphasis in German newspapers.

It was under these conditions that the press re-emerged in Germany. The first German-language newspaper published in the US zone of occupation was the

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Frankfurter Rundschau, appearing on 31 July 1945 with an initial circulation of 500,000. More newspapers were soon established in Heidelberg, Marburg, Stuttgart, Bremen, Wiesbaden, Munich, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and Nuremburg, as well as in Hof, Augsburg, Darmstadt, and Regensburg. By late 1946, thirty-eight newspapers were licensed in the American zone, with a circulation of roughly four million. In June 1945, a German News Service (Deutsche Allgemeine Nachrichten Agentur: DANA) was established on the model of the American Associated Press. Like the newspapers themselves, DANA was first operated under complete military control and gradually handed over to publishers licensed by the American occupying force. By 1946, 'the news service was completely in German hands, free to conduct its own affairs, subject only to the few restrictions then applied to the indigenous press as a whole' (Norman 1951, 43).

The appraisal of the German press under the ICD as free, democratic, and non-political brings into stark relief the *police* function of the press under occupation. Having curtailed all media circulation in the American zone, the ICD went about re-establishing circulation contingent upon a restrictive and punitive licensing system to encourage the production of a self-censoring German press system. It was a miniature of what Neocleous (2000) has identified as the transformation of the disciplinary logic of *police* to the disciplinary logic of the market, here in the form of a highly contingent liberal 'free press'. It resembled what served in another context as a model for American power through the establishment and financing of a liberal press which 'may rightfully be regarded as autonomous; but in the exercise of its autonomy will naturally have due regard for the source of its funds' ('Understanding' 1949).[1] What resulted was a system not of free competition, but one in which a nominally liberal press acquired the appearance of editorial independence from party rule as such, while authority was exercised through the gradual transition to path-dependent presses set up by editors loyal to American occupying officials.

As head of the United States' vast psychological war apparatus, McClure attempted to solidify the status of psychological warfare in domestic debates over its nature and place in times of peace. Alongside General Eisenhower, McClure advocated for keeping psychological warfare under military control. McClure and Eisenhower had become friends during the 1942 Darlan affair in North Africa, where along with *Time–Life–Fortune* Vice President C. D. Jackson the three worked on damage control over Eisenhower's decision to work with Vichy France (Cook 1984, 46). As debates over the future of psychological warfare developed between 1946 and 1947 in State–War–Navy Coordinating Committees,

[1] The quotation refers to the establishment by the CIA of the National Committee for a Free Europe, to be discussed later.

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Eisenhower reached out to his former psychological war chief to insist that they must 'keep psywar alive' within the Army (Paddock 1973, 74).

Despite the support for psychological war from major figures such as Eisenhower and McClure, many Army officers believed that the military should not be 'selling democracy' in times of peace. As a correspondence between US Army Generals Willard Wyman and General Lauris Norstad reveals, many in the Army were apprehensive about psychological war during peacetime. As was often the case, however, apprehension attached primarily to concerns over the public's hostility towards psychological war. In a letter to Norstad, Wyman wrote that there was 'a great need for a synonym which could be used in peacetime that would not shock the sensibilities of a citizen of democracy'. In another letter to Major General Eddy, Norstad warned of 'huge opposition' from the public and press if plans to continue psychological warfare were not presented 'very carefully'. Though it was perhaps an underestimation of the willingness of the press to cooperate in a Cold War context, General Eddy agreed, suggesting that psychological warfare should continue 'under the aegis of an agency not directly connected with the armed forces' (cited in Paddock 1973, 77–8).

In a meeting in November 1947, the secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff determined that as matters of state policy both overt and covert propaganda operations should belong to the Department of State, and on 24 November 1947 President Harry Truman assigned psychological warfare coordination to Secretary of State George Marshall. Indicative again of the 'uncertainty and caution' surrounding psychological warfare, the decision was reversed after only three weeks, with Marshall objecting to the State Department's involvement in covert operations that could, if revealed, embarrass the Department and harm diplomatic relations. Like General Wyman, however, Marshall's opposition was not to psychological warfare as such but to State Department culpability. Marshall's recommendation was that psychological warfare be waged with guidance from the Department of State, but at a plausibly deniable remove. The result was that in both military and diplomatic circles enthusiasm for psychological warfare was tempered by an aversion to culpability should covert programmes be exposed. The situation was ripe, therefore, for the passage of a National Security Council directive (NSC-4A) on 14 December 1947 that placed responsibility for psychological warfare within the newly established CIA in only its third month of existence (National Security Council 1947).

In response to NSC-4A, those in the Department of the Army who wished for psychological warfare to remain an Army responsibility argued that, as a kind of 'war', psychological warfare belonged within a military structure. A study initiated by the Army in January 1948 discussed 'insidious and destructive' communist propaganda that it claimed 'directly threatened' American national security. The Army argued that 'inasmuch as the use of propaganda as a weapon of either war

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or peace is of fundamental concern to the Department of the Army, it is believed imperative that Army efforts in this field be coordinated and directed' (cited in Paddock 1973, 83). On the question of 'public sensitivity' concerning psychological warfare, the Army study concluded that

> the fact that the American people and Congress do not like and/or are afraid of domestic propaganda, is no excuse for us to sidestep our responsibility. The responsibility of accepting the consequence of doing nothing is far greater. The American people have proved [sic] too many times that they can 'take it' if they are told why. (Cited in Paddock 1973, 83)

The study had been produced by the Army's Department of Planning and Operations in close collaboration with McClure and other Army partisans. However, opinions differed within the armed forces on the question of psychological war. Omar Bradley, the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, saw psychological warfare as appropriate in times of war, but not in peacetime. As McClure countered, however, given the scale of the Army's psychological warfare operations in occupied Germany, Japan, and Korea, the Department of the Army was already 'the foremost US propaganda agency of our government'. The State Department, McClure continued, had not 'taken over its responsibilities in this field for a number of reasons', but foremost among them was that, relative to the new Department of Defense, it lacked the appropriations to do so (Paddock 1973, 89).

The issue of appropriations came up again later, but in the interim McClure illustrated his point in a letter to Army General Albert Wedemeyer reproducing the litany of extant US Army psychological warfare operations. Concluding what historian Alfred Paddock has called 'one of the most comprehensive communications on the subject of psywar written by an Army officer during the interwar years', McClure urged recognition of psychological warfare as an *Army* responsibility. He called for the establishment of an organisation within the National Defenses to carry out operations, planning, and research, and for the recruitment of 'willing, experienced civilians' such as his wartime deputy C. D. Jackson. In Wedemeyer's response to McClure, he explained that the decision to implement a psychological warfare capability was essentially out of the Army's hands and in those of the National Security Council. However, Wedemeyer relayed to McClure the interest of a young Frank Wisner, head of the CIA's new Office of Special Projects. In recognition of McClure's status as 'the most knowledgeable and experienced officer in the game', Wisner was keen to recruit McClure to the CIA.

McClure declined, and many in the Army had justifiable concerns that Wisner would become 'another [William] Donovan' who would 'run away with the ball' (Corson 1977, 304). The beginning of the Korean War in 1950 brought back to the fore the question of the Army's capacity to wage psychological war, leading to struggles between McClure and Wisner over control of guerrilla and

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covert operations in the field. Having declined Wisner's offer, McClure became on 15 January 1951 head of the Army's Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, which sought to combine psychological warfare with the 'unconventional warfare activities' of subterfuge, sabotage, and guerrilla activities behind enemy lines. With the support of Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, a man with an 'intense personal interest' in psychological warfare, the Korean War became a new testing ground for psychological war in theatre combat. Indeed, US forces in Korea produced a mixture of tactical and strategic leaflets that combined amounted to thirteen million per week. Tactical leaflets included claims of good treatment for prisoners of war and appeals for defection, as well as the perennial theme of American 'material superiority' and the subsequent 'body count' figures it produced.[2]

Just as advocates in the Army made their bid for Army control over psychological warfare, so too did advocates from the Department of State. After NSC-4A assigned covert psychological warfare operations to the CIA, George Kennan lamented that 'we [in the State Department] are ill-equipped to engage in political and psychological conflict with the Soviet world' (cited in Lucas 1996, 284). Kennan's advocacy in 1948 was decisive in pushing the State Department to take an aggressive stance towards the Soviet Union, with his policy planning staff training and employing refugees from the Soviet bloc in psychological warfare. Like the Army, the Department of State wished to be involved in the planning of psychological warfare activities, yet also removed from culpability for it. In this Kennan was again aided by the CIA's Frank Wisner, whose Office of Special Projects could provide both the desired coordination with, and distance from, psychological war.

It was in the context of these cross-currents of reticence and enthusiasm at the Departments of the Army and State that responsibility for psychological warfare ultimately landed with the CIA. Having been established precisely for the conduct of such covert operations, the creation of the CIA allowed for the reproduction of the wartime division between the 'black' operations of the OSS, which used deceit, subterfuge, and misattribution, and the 'white' operations of the OWI, whose 'strategy of truth' advertised objective and factual war reporting. As William Donovan noted during the Second World War, though the OWI and OSS often clashed over jurisdiction, both black and white operations in fact worked in tandem: to maintain the façade of a 'strategy of truth', covert operations needed to be externalised from overt ones. Through participation in coordinating committees such as Wisner's Office of Special Projects (later renamed the Office of Policy Coordination) and President Truman's Psychological Strategy Board, the State Department could shield itself from diplomatic exposure, while the Army could avoid apparent encroachment on matters of policymaking.

[2] See Tyner (2009) for a discussion of the rhetoric of 'body counts' in the Vietnam War.

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CIA at the reins

One of the first major psychological warfare operations organised by the CIA was the establishment of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in Eastern Europe (Cummings 2010a; Johnson 2010; Mickelson 1983). While the purpose of the Radios was to broadcast pro-capitalist, anti-communist propaganda behind the Iron Curtain, like the construction of psychological warfare between 1940 and 1941, the establishment of the Radios involved a massive publicity campaign *within* the United States, this time to create the illusion that the Radios were fully funded through voluntary donations by ordinary US citizens. Once again, the establishment of a large-scale psychological warfare operation abroad was intimately tied to the construction of a domestic geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare and the role of the ordinary American citizen within it. However, while the 1940–1 campaign revolved around the theme of 'psychological defense' against a German 'strategy of terror', a new campaign beginning in 1950 constructed a geopolitical imaginary in which the United States would take the offensive in a new international war of ideas.

In its own public retrospective, the CIA (2007) called Radio Free Europe 'one of the longest running and successful covert action campaigns ever mounted by the United States', having maintained successful cover until the late 1960s behind a domestic front group called the National Committee for a Free Europe (later renamed the Free Europe Committee). The Committee enjoyed a line-up of OSS veterans surrounded by prominent American businessmen and politicians. Notable members included William Donovan, Allen Dulles, Dwight Eisenhower, Lucius Clay, Henry Luce, and Dewitt Wallace, owner of *Reader's Digest* magazine (see Sharp 2001).[3] Though it is unclear whether all its membership was aware of the group's CIA origin, it is likely that the agency's role remained an open secret, especially for those, like Donovan, directly connected to the intelligence community. For its part, the Committee sustained the CIA's cover by creating the illusion that it was an organic civil society organisation spontaneously formed by concerned citizens to 'fight communism in the war of ideas'.

The origins of the programme can be traced to a 30 April 1948 planning paper written by Kennan for the National Security Council in which he discusses the creation of such a private committee working undercover, but in close relation

[3] The full membership as of 1949 included Frank Altschul, Laird Bell, A. A. Berle, Francis Biddle, Robert Woods Bliss, Robert Bradford, Harry Bullis, James B. Carey, Harry Woodburn Chase, Lucius Clay, William Clayton, Clark Clifford, Cecil DeMille, Frank Denton, Frederic Dobeare, William J. Donovan, Hugh Drum, Allen Dulles, Dwight Eisenhower, Mark Ethridge, James Farley, Virginia Gildersleeve, William Green, Joseph Grew, Charles Hook, Palmer Hoyt, Arthur Bliss Lane, Herbert Lehman, Henry Luce, Joseph McKee, Web Maddox, Arthur Page, Robert Patterson, DeWitt Poole, Reuben Robertson, John Sibley, Spyros Skouras, Charles P. Taft, DeWitt Wallace, W. W. Waymack, Walter Wheeler, Matthew Woll, Mrs. Quincy Wright, and Darryl Zanuck.

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to the US government, to sponsor the activities of political exiles from Soviet-aligned countries. Whereas the post-war Fulbright programme sought to expand global US influence through the coordination of exchange programmes, Kennan's envisioned programme would foster political exiles in the United States to leverage their voices against the Soviet Union both domestically and abroad. Its guiding philosophy would be that psychological warfare featuring 'indigenous' voices would be received in their native countries as more authentic, an early illustration of what Katz *et al*. (1955) famously called the 'two-step' propaganda technique.

While much of the uncertainty surrounding psychological warfare in the post-war years revolved around the question of its use in times of peace, Kennan firmly believed that the necessity of waging psychological war erased the distinction between war and peace altogether. In the opening line of the planning paper in which he outlines what later became the Committee for a Free Europe, Kennan (1948) presaged Foucault's observation thirty years later that 'political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in time of peace'. While the logic of 'total war' had done much to effect a breakdown between military and civilian life, for Kennan it had not gone far enough, and the United States remained 'handicapped by a popular attachment to the concept of a basic difference between peace and war'.

Like George Marshall before him, Kennan believed that the State Department should coordinate both overt and covert psychological warfare while maintaining optical distance and deniability. Kennan had been 'deeply impressed by the results achieved in Italy' in 1948, where the CIA had funded Christian democrats against communists. Kennan's intention was to expand on the tactics used in Italy to 'create a mechanism for direct intervention in the electoral processes of foreign governments' (Mickelson 1983, 14). Kennan specifically advised the creation of 'liberation committees' for the purpose of producing 'liberation movements' in the Soviet world. He argued that the work of these committees should appear overt, led by 'trusted private American citizens', but in reality 'receive covert guidance and possibly assistance from the Government'. Again, plausible deniability was paramount: 'while covert political warfare must be controlled by the [State] Department, the direction should not be physically in the Department of State', more so since the funds necessary to arrange such an operation could not be concealed within the State Department's budget. Recalling McClure's point that the State Department would have trouble funding psychological warfare that the Army would not, Kennan (1948) wrote that 'the NSC Secretariat would seem to provide the best possible cover for such a directorate'.

A year later, on 19 April 1949, plans for what would become the NCFE were ready to be implemented. Two OSS veterans – the CIA's Frank Wisner and the NCFE's first president DeWitt Poole – met with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in his Washington, DC, office to discuss plans for the operation and to secure the latter's blessing concerning the use of foreign émigrés in the programme.

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Hoover was enthusiastic, believing that 'communism could be withstood only by education', and insisted that the pair recruit a 'quality' executive membership for the proposed committee. He suggested furthermore that Wisner's office should consult the FBI's files when vetting émigré agents and informants for use in the programme. The suggestion was happily received with the caveat that the Committee be allowed to liaise with the FBI's New York office, since it was 'desirable for this committee to keep out of Washington as much as possible' ('Office of Policy Coordination' 1949).

It was an extraordinary meeting. While Hoover's importance in waging the Cold War is well understood, Wisner and Poole remain more obscure figures; at that time, the first was approaching the pinnacle of his power and influence, while the latter was coming to the end of a long and distinguished career. Before the Second World War, Frank Wisner was, like his friend William Donovan, a Wall Street lawyer, who had in fact been recruited by Donovan for service in the OSS. At the OSS, Wisner took on various assignments: first in Cairo, then in Istanbul, before eventually being driven from Budapest in 1944 by the advancing Red Army (Dorchester 2015; Jeffreys-Jones 2000). After the war Wisner returned to Wall Street, becoming a senior partner at the law firm Carter Ledyard before being recruited by the State Department in 1947. There he worked quickly to become director of its Office of Special Projects, soon renamed to the secretive Office of Policy Coordination. In 1951 Wisner succeeded Allen Dulles as the CIA's second Deputy Director of Plans, controlling major portions of the CIA's budget and personnel. As Deputy Director, Wisner oversaw major covert operations, including the overthrow of Iran's Mossadegh in 1953 and Guatemala's Jacobo Arbenz in 1954 (Cullather 1994).

Wisner was also involved in other significant intelligence operations, from the stay-behind networks in post-war Europe (Wala 2016) to supporting the failed Hungarian uprising of 1956. However, it was during this decisive period in the late 1940s and early 1950s that Wisner set up his most infamous operation, Project Mockingbird. Though details remain unclear, Mockingbird was carried out under Wisner's Office of Policy Coordination and is generally agreed to have involved recruiting foreign and domestic journalists to gather intelligence and manipulate media coverage of the Cold War (Flynn 2015, 432). Public knowledge of Mockingbird was partially revealed by the Church Committee of 1975, but as Carl Bernstein (1977) reported, information on the CIA's journalist programme remained guarded as more sensational revelations grabbed headlines.[4]

[4] As Bernstein (1977, 64) recounts a source's account: 'Church and some of the other members were much more interested in making headlines than in doing serious, tough investigating. The Agency pretended to be giving up a lot whenever it was asked about the flashy stuff – assassinations and secret weapons and James Bond operations. Then, when it came to things that they didn't want to give away, that were much more important to the Agency, Colby in particular called in his chits. And the committee bought it.'

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It remains the case that 'questions abound' (Maret 2018) concerning Operation Mockingbird and Frank Wisner's role in developing contacts in the American news media; however, some estimates suggest that by the mid-1950s almost 600 journalists globally – including prominent journalists at CBS, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *Newsweek* – were involved in the programme (Bernstein 1977; Davis 1979; Flynn 2015; Loory 1974). As described by Loory (1974, 12) in the *Columbia Journalism Review*,

> Wisner built an organization that he laughingly but lovingly called 'my mighty Wurlitzer'. It was a wondrous machine that used many instruments – charitable foundations, labor unions, book publishers, the student movement – to play variations on a theme: the discrediting of communism, the shaming of the Soviet Union, the promotion of the Christian Democratic movement in Western Europe and the building of a positive image for the United States abroad.

The other man in the room with Hoover and Wisner was DeWitt Poole, another OSS veteran who, unlike Wisner, was at the end of a long career that began with Foreign Service posts in Paris and Berlin before the First World War. After assignment to Russia during the 1917 revolution, he became chief of the State Department's Russian division in 1919. He later resigned from this position, protesting that the United States had not been critical enough of the 'complete immorality of the Bolshevik leaders' and what he understood as Lenin's 'world policy' of communist expansion (Lees 2000, 90). In 1930, Poole became the head of Princeton's School of Public and International Affairs, where he 'developed his views on the vital role to be played in democracy by the active citizen' (Scott-Smith 2014, 96). In 1937, he co-founded *Public Opinion Quarterly*, which after the Second World War became the academic clearinghouse for psychological warfare research and debate (see Simpson 1994).

In a 1940 Princeton address, Poole had insisted that the role of government was to create in its citizens a 'belligerent loyalty' towards the United States and the 'liberal-democratic' way of life. A year later he joined William Donovan on the ground floor of the Office of the Coordinator of Information (CoI) and then at the OSS, heading the Foreign Nationalities Branches (FNB) of both. At the FNB, Poole coordinated the exploitation of recent immigrants, political exiles, and refugees as both sources of intelligence and psychological warfare assets, particularly as concerned their home countries and respective diasporas within the United States. The selection of Poole as president of the Committee for a Free Europe was thus a natural choice, given its reproduction of the tactics and themes of his FNB at the CoI and OSS.

During his time as head of the FNB, Poole employed themes of 'spiritual' and psychological warfare to foreshadow the crusade against communism he

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envisioned after the end of the Second World War. In a speech on 3 July 1942, he insisted that

> [d]emocracy must turn militant again … To reconquer the key positions of the world, democracy must not only put forth armies of the sword but send after them, as rapidly as the fighting lets up, equally equipped armies of the spirit – convinced and trained missionaries, propagandists. Without this sequel the present war becomes only a gesture of defense offering at best but negative and short-term gains. The surest, perhaps the only, insurance against another world-wide civil cataclysm soon again is to win a preponderance of the strong peoples of the world to some single general faith and purpose … My proposal is that two systems of scholarships be at once set up with a view to training a good number of carefully selected young women and men citizens, chiefly those of recent foreign extraction, to become working missionaries of democracy in the post-armistice world. (Cited in Scott-Smith 2014, 96)

Mirroring his conviction that the Soviet Union meant to embark upon a mission of world revolution, Poole saw the expansion of American liberal capitalism as an article of missionary faith for the post-war world. After the war, Poole was heavily involved in European affairs, serving as chief of the State Department's interrogation programme in Germany, which collected intelligence and vetted Germans for leadership roles for the task of rebuilding the German state. It was as president of the NCFE, however, that Poole most forcefully pursued his vision of liberal-capitalist evangelism at the forefront of the anti-communist state–private networks of the Cold War.

With Hoover's blessing to recruit a 'quality' executive, Wisner and Poole set about finding suitable membership for the NCFE. Its first chairman, Joseph Grew, a career diplomat, played the role of the concerned private citizen in his recruitment of other influential and connected Americans. In a 27 May 1949 recruitment letter to Charles P. Taft, son of the former president, Grew (1949) insisted that the NCFE would 'fit the American habit that private citizens should take the initiative' to 'combat the mounting threat of communism'. It was an ironic claim given the extent to which the NCFE was conceived and executed at the highest levels of government. Nevertheless, Grew recruited members on the principle that it could fight communism in the 'sector of ideas', as a complement to the military and economic strategies of NATO and the Marshall Plan.

Much like Poole's FNB at the OSS, the FCNE proposed to groom and leverage political refugees from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for use in psychological war, particularly in radio appeals to their respective home countries. As Grew put it, Radio Free Europe would 'put the voices of refugee political leaders on the air so that they will be heard by their own peoples in Europe, in their own languages, in the old familiar tones'. However, like Poole's FNB, which took plays 'out of the Creel book' as well as its own 'store of stratagems and tricks', leveraging

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foreign political exiles was also an opportunity to intervene in US political life (Lees 2000, 85). To this end, foreign recruits who were 'qualified by personality and mastery of English' were put at the disposal of 'trade unions, farm organizations, colleges and universities, churches, civic organizations, women's clubs and other organizations' to educate their various memberships on the purported evils of communism (Grew 1949).

In the summer of 1949, an official press release heralding the establishment of the NCFE cited an apparent American commitment to 'opposing despotism' (NCFE 1949) as its *raison d'être*. The committee did not parse words in insisting that 'Communist oppressors have replaced Nazi oppressors'. Calling the Soviet Union a 'slave society', the NCFE's motto, which appeared on all its promotional material, paraphrased Abraham Lincoln's anti-slavery Gettysburg Address, replacing its national imaginary for a global one: 'this *world*, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom' (NCFE 1951b, emphasis in original).[5] In this geopolitical imagination, US liberal-capitalism's fight against communism was clothed not only in the mantle of slavery abolition, but also as a holy and righteous *crusade*. Reviving the religious undertones of spiritual self-defence surrounding psychological warfare, the NCFE cast the Cold War as a 'struggle for the souls of men'.

Soon after the NCFE's official debut, its evangelical undertones were made overt via the announcement of a 'Crusade for Freedom' on Labor Day 1950. Led by General Lucius Clay, the charismatic figure at the centre of the previous year's 'Berlin air lift', the Crusade was launched in a national radio address by presidential hopeful Dwight Eisenhower, then-president of Columbia University. The context of Labor Day was significant, as Eisenhower again stressed that under Communism 'one third of the human race works in virtual bondage' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950a). On its surface, the Crusade for Freedom's debut therefore appeared as a campaign to publicise the NCFE and its effort to fund and operate Radio Free Europe in Eastern Europe.

Within the framework of funding Radio Free Europe, however, the NCFE advanced a geopolitical imaginary in which ordinary Americans could participate in a kind of 'spiritual warfare' against the Soviet Union, what the *New York Times* supportively called a 'world-wide battle for men's minds' (*New York Times*, 4 July 1950). The *Times* barely altered NCFE press releases in framing the Crusade as filling 'the need for a large-scale democratic truth offensive … in the most important battle of all, the battle of ideas' (*New York Times*, 28 July 1950). This so-called battle of ideas revived the spectre of fifth columns in the United States and Western Europe. The people of Western Europe were, the NCFE claimed, struggling to 'guard their freedom against a fifth column attack which is without precedent for its lack of principle, its intensity and its range of action' (NCFE 1949).

[5] The original read that 'this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom'.

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While pre-war fifth column alarmism in the United States primarily concerned convincing Americans that they were under siege by German subversives, the Crusade for Freedom repurposed the narrative to construct an image of US psychological warfare in which the United States could similarly wage war at a distance against an enemy ideology. Playing again on the stage set by the OWI's 'strategy of truth' and its biblical refrain that 'the truth shall set you free', the Crusade advanced a kind of Christian-liberal revolutionary idealism. As Eisenhower argued in his Labor Day speech, 'the communist leaders believe that, unless they destroy our system, their own subjects, gradually gaining an understanding of the blessings and opportunities of liberty, will repudiate communism and tear its dictators from their positions of power' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950a).

The Crusade exhaustively advanced a geopolitical imagination in which individual citizens *qua* individuals could wage psychological war. While Edmond Taylor's 'nerve privates' took primarily defensive positions against an ostensible barrage of German psychological war, the Crusade promised to give the American citizen the psychological initiative by transforming them into a kind of private liberator-warrior (Figure 3.1). Against the 'devilish libel' of Soviet propaganda, Eisenhower promised 'every American the chance to *participate directly* to counter this propaganda assault' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950b, emphasis mine). The theme of participation was significant; however, like Dewitt Poole's emphasis on the importance of the 'active citizen' in securing democratic morale, participation in psychological war against communism took strange, often risible forms.[6] While the liberal rhetoric of participation and political activity were presented as ciphers for the freedom of the individual in a liberal-capitalist society, closer analysis suggests that the Crusade for Freedom can be understood not as the exercise of autonomous or collective political agency, but as an archetypal exercise in governmental power.

The operation of governmental power can especially be discerned in the Crusade's efforts to harness the agency of American citizens for two major domestic psychological war efforts: the solicitation of 'truth dollars' to fund Radio Free Europe, and

[6] In the 1950s, the concept of 'participation' gained currency among liberal modernisation theorists as a cipher for liberal-capitalist governance; see Daniel Lerner's (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society*. Emerging from MIT's Center for International Studies (CENIS), *The Passing of Traditional Society*, based on the Voice of America studies in the Middle East, is held up as a defining text of the development school of Communication Studies but was in fact 'conceived and carried out for the specific purpose of advancing US propaganda programs in the Middle East' (Simpson 1994, 10). Central to Lerner's (1958, 46) theory was the belief that mass communication could produce a 'rapid spread of new desires' that would encourage 'participation' in modern society. 'We stress', Lerner wrote, 'that the transition to participant society hinged upon the desire among individuals to participate. It grows as more and more individuals take leave of the constrictive traditional universe and nudge their psyche toward the expansive new land of heart's desire'. For Lerner, 'participation' was primarily economic and restricted to waged labour, and secondarily political, and restricted to voting: 'increasing media exposure has 'gone with' wider economic participation (per capita income) and political participation (voting)'.

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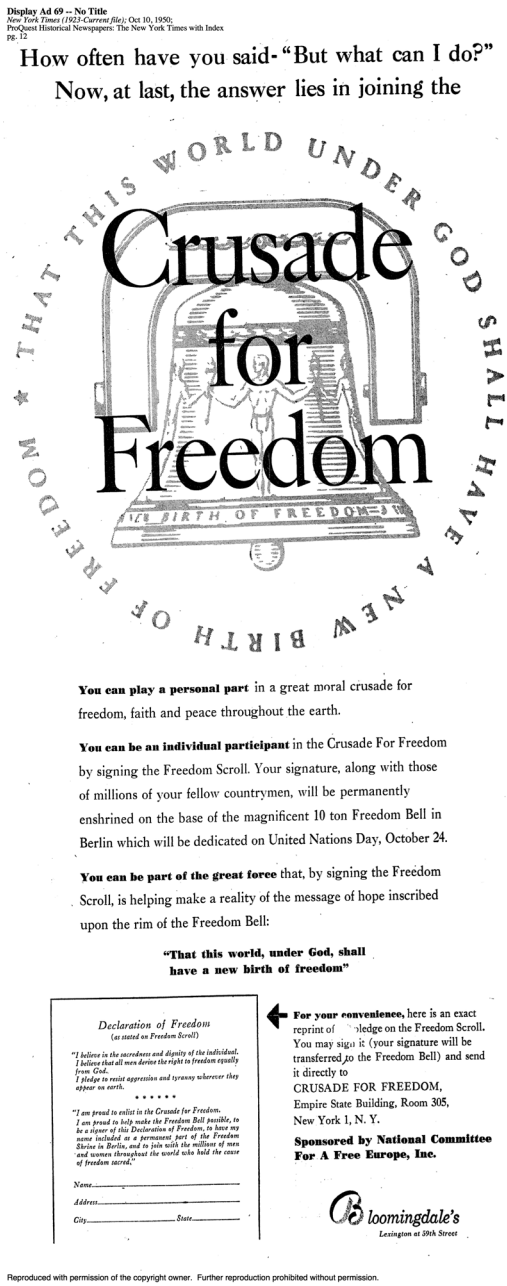

Display Ad 69 -- No Title
New York Times (1923-Current file); Oct 10, 1950;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times with Index
pg. 12

How often have you said- "But what can I do?"
Now, at last, the answer lies in joining the

THAT THIS WORLD UNDER GOD SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM ★

Crusade for Freedom

You can play a personal part in a great moral crusade for freedom, faith and peace throughout the earth.

You can be an individual participant in the Crusade For Freedom by signing the Freedom Scroll. Your signature, along with those of millions of your fellow countrymen, will be permanently enshrined on the base of the magnificent 10 ton Freedom Bell in Berlin which will be dedicated on United Nations Day, October 24.

You can be part of the great force that, by signing the Freedom Scroll, is helping make a reality of the message of hope inscribed upon the rim of the Freedom Bell:

"That this world, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom"

Declaration of Freedom
(as stated on Freedom Scroll)

"I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual. I believe that all men derive the right to freedom equally from God. I pledge to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on earth.

* * * * * *

"I am proud to enlist in the Crusade for Freedom. I am proud to help make the Freedom Bell possible, to be a signer of this Declaration of Freedom, to have my name included as a permanent part of the Freedom Shrine in Berlin, and to join with the millions of men and women throughout the world who hold the cause of freedom sacred."

Name_____
Address_____
City_____ State_____

For your convenience, here is an exact reprint of [illegible]pledge on the Freedom Scroll. You may sign it (your signature will be transferred to the Freedom Bell) and send it directly to
CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM,
Empire State Building, Room 305,
New York 1, N. Y.

Sponsored by National Committee For A Free Europe, Inc.

Bloomingdale's
Lexington at 59th Street

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Figure 3.1 Advertisement for the 'Crusade for Freedom' (*New York Times*, 10 October 1950)

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the signing of 'freedom scrolls', both of which were a means for Americans to pledge themselves in 'the fight against communism'. Like the 1940–1 effort to construct a popular geopolitical imagination of psychological warfare, these efforts had the ouroboric effect of doing propaganda for propaganda. They can be understood in terms of *avowal* and *investment*, which a 1951 Crusade pamphlet (NCFE 1951b) describes as

a. Securing millions of signatures on the Freedom Scroll, to demonstrate American unity under our traditional banner of freedom. This will answer the Big Lie of Communist aggressors by the Big Truth that Americans want peace and freedom for all men.
b. Securing millions of contributions to the Crusade for Freedom, to expand the assault of Radio Free Europe on the weak links of the Communist Empire: namely, its enslaved millions in whose hearts the hope of freedom still burns fiercely.

The following sections investigate the significance of the Crusade for Freedom's psychological warfare within the United States. They suggest that the Crusade's domestic propaganda operated by constructing a liberal geopolitical imaginary of psychological warfare based on the *participation* of citizens through acts of *avowal* (signing of the 'freedom scroll') and *investment* (donating 'truth dollars'). In examining these acts of avowal and investment, I argue that psychological warfare in the United States was underwritten not only by acts of deception, but also through the productive employment of ordinary citizens.

March of the truth dollars

We swing along and sing a song of 'freedom for all'
We are the Truth Dollars
Like little drops of water we can crumble a wall
We are the Truth Dollars
Behind the Iron Curtain we are giving them the truth
On Radio Free Europe we are speaking up for you
Freedom's indivisible, so get on the ball
Send in your Truth Dollars.

March of the Truth Dollars, Hy Zaret
Song for the Crusade for Freedom 1958 national radio campaign[7]

Though the operating costs of Radio Free Europe and its parent Committee for a Free Europe were fully paid for by the CIA, the illusion that both were organic, grassroots initiatives was imperative to their operation. This illusion was sustained by the Crusade's solicitation of so-called truth dollars, small donations from American citizens that allowed Radio Free Europe to appear as a fully private and independent organisation funded by ordinary Americans. Calls for 'truth dollar'

[7] See Cummings (2010a).

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donations appeared in magazines, radio advertisements, workplace pledge drives, and sometimes even fell from the sky in the form of airdropped leaflets. Donors were encouraged to give as much as they could, but the suggested donation of a single truth dollar reflected the CNFE's interest in drawing the widest possible constituency into its fold. Paid return postage and envelopes for donations were often provided by the Crusade, ironically costing the NCFE more in administrative costs than the dollar received therein. Even though the average truth dollar donation represented a financial *loss* for the Committee, CIA funding meant the Crusade could spend lavishly to advertise the truth dollar drive and maintain the appearance of a grassroots movement to 'fight against communism'.

Central to the Crusade for Freedom's vision was the belief that, as a private organisation, Radio Free Europe could act in ways that the United States government could not. In his 1950 Labor Day speech, Eisenhower lauded Voice of America but stressed the United States' need for 'powerful radio stations abroad, *without* Government restrictions'. As the *New York Times* suggested, diplomatic considerations prevented the State Department and Voice of America from 'speaking too bluntly' to foreign peoples and governments (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950b). As an ostensibly private, citizen-led organisation, however, it was believed that Radio Free Europe could achieve what Voice of America could not. Indeed, the idea that Radio Free Europe could act as a 'free enterprise' cutting through government bureaucracy and inefficiency was a central feature of its rhetorical appeal. The ostensible voluntarism of the Crusade also satisfied the ideological conceits of the Cold War United States. When Crusade spokesman General Lucius Clay addressed a room of business and civic leaders at the Yale Club shortly after the Crusade's launch, he therefore insisted that 'it's not our way of life to depend on government'; rather, 'it's up to every citizen to augment the Voice of America' (*New York Times*, 20 September 1950). Clay's words echoed former Undersecretary of State Joseph Grew's recruitment letters which claimed that the Committee 'fit the American habit that private citizens should take the initiative'. It therefore remained an enduring and fundamental irony that Radio Free Europe would have been totally impossible without massive covert funding from the US security state.

Beyond creating cover for CIA funding, solicitation of truth dollars dovetailed with the emergent geo-economic ideology of the 'free flow of information'. As Herbert Schiller (1969, 1975) has demonstrated, rhetoric surrounding the 'free flow of information' was central to post-war American imperialism in the arena of communication. Couched in cosmopolitan language of 'free and open' exchange of culture and information, the free flow doctrine disguised the economic geography of the Cold War struggle over the political economy of communication in the developing world. As Schiller (1986, 57) argues,

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> 'free flow' cannot exist, according to media owners and editors, without a 'free press'. And a 'free press,' still according to the wisdom of this group, depends on the financial support of advertising. 'We acknowledge,' the Talloires Declaration states, 'the importance of advertising as a consumer service and in providing financial support for a strong and self-sustaining press. Without financial independence, the press cannot be independent.'

Though in the early 1950s American economic hegemony was far from that reflected in the 1981 Talloires Declaration, the logic equating the freedom of information with its privatisation and commodification had already materialised in the new international reach of US media industries. Celebration of US-led media privatisation as the standard-bearer for press freedom was correspondingly central to the Crusade's rhetoric and promotional activities. As Roscoe Drummond, director of information for the Economic Cooperation Administration in Europe, noted on the occasion of the Crusade's launch of 1,000 balloons from the Empire State Building in October 1950, 'the communists are afraid to allow a free exchange of information … The time to spread the propaganda of truth and freedom is now' (*New York Times*, 11 October 1950).[8] The balloons for their part carried envelopes and promotional leaflets soliciting truth dollars from the citizens below, a stark illustration of the Crusade's roots in psychological warfare techniques honed during the Second World War. In the geo-economic imagination, barriers to American capital and investment in the fields of news, media, and cultural production became de facto curbs on the 'freedom of ideas' and 'freedom of speech' as such. The truth dollar therefore functioned as a kind of rhetorical sleight of hand, conflating the freedom of US capital with freedom of speech writ large.

Despite the fact that Radio Free Europe's operations were totally disconnected from its fundraising efforts, the Crusade nevertheless contrived to suggest a price equivalence for 'truth behind the iron curtain', claiming that 'every dollar buys 100 words of truth' (Figure 3.2). Not only did the Crusade advance the premise that private individuals could participate in psychological warfare in a private capacity, it also did so in a way that was fundamentally tied to the expression of personal and political agency through the market. If Foucault (2008, 31) notes that neoliberal ideology understands the market as a 'site of veridiction' where truth is expressed through the price mechanism, the Crusade went further to frame the market as a site where individuals could assert truth in ways that exceeded what was possible by the state.

[8] The comment was gathered from Roscoe Drummond, director of information for the Economic Cooperation Administration in Europe, on the occasion of the Crusade's launch of 1,000 balloons from the Empire State Building, to which were attached Crusade pamphlets and envelopes soliciting freedom dollars (*New York Times*, 11 October 1950).

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Figure 3.2 'You Mean I Can Fight Communism?': Crusade advertising campaign (Crusade for Freedom Advertising Council 1954)

Like the rhetorical sleight of hand through which it conflated freedom of capital with freedom of speech, the contrivance of a price mechanism through which American citizens could participate in psychological warfare reimagined individual political agency as an act of market exchange. In the geo-economic imaginary of the Crusade for Freedom, not only was Radio Free Europe a medium for broadcasting 'truth' behind the Iron Curtain, it also represented the deeper truth of market veridiction reflected in the Crusade's appearance as a spontaneous, demand-driven, and self-organised market for political agency. In reality, the CIA's organisation and funding of the Crusade contradicted every claim it advanced: it lost money on every truth dollar it collected, and the ostensible spontaneity of its private actors was in fact orchestrated by a large and centralised state bureaucracy. However, the fantasy of a spontaneous organisation of private actors achieving what government could not exemplified the idea that the market could act as a site of veridictive truth. While Radio Free Europe attempted to 'fight communism' in Eastern Europe, the Crusade for Freedom advanced a domestic political imaginary in which the American dollar became both a medium of personal political agency, and a guarantor of truth and freedom.

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Tell me who you are

> *I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual.*
> *I believe that all men derive the right of freedom equally from God.*
> *I pledge to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on earth.*
> *I am proud to enlist in the Crusade for Freedom.*
> *I am proud to help make the Freedom Bell possible, to be a signer of this Declaration of Freedom, to have my name included as a permanent part of the Freedom Shrine in Berlin, and to join with the millions of men and women throughout the world who hold the cause of freedom sacred.*
>
> Crusade for Freedom 'Freedom Scroll'

Foucault's identification of the market as a site of veridiction for neoliberal ideology came at a crossroads in his intellectual trajectory. Developed in the *Birth of Biopolitics* lecture series, his critique of neoliberalism was among his few substantive investigations of the 20th century, appearing after his *Security, Territory, Population* lectures, which focused mostly on the emergence of 17th- and 18th-century governmentality, and before his sudden and subsequent turn to the origins of Christianity. It was, however, the theme of 'veridiction' – of investigating procedures of the manifestation of truth through speech – that carried his interest both forward to an investigation of its significance to the history of the liberal present, and backwards to its Christian origins in practices of confession and avowal of self. While Foucault (2014a, 19, 17, 2014b, 80) only hinted at the political significance of avowal of self in the 20th century, the Crusade for Freedom is an extraordinary study of the way that avowal – 'a verbal act through which the subject affirms who he is, and binds himself to this truth' – created an 'obligation for individuals to become essential actors in the procedures of manifestation of the truth'.

In addition to the solicitation of truth dollars, a central feature of the Crusade for Freedom involved the recruitment of Americans to sign so-called freedom scrolls pledging their commitment to the Crusade and its fight against communism. The scrolls mimicked in appearance the American Declaration of Independence while also invoking the ancient and biblical connotations of the scroll (Figure 3.3).[9] Framed quite literally as a Christian crusade against communism, the scrolls reflected the Committee's tendency to saturate its products in Christian imagery and to portray the Cold War as a Manichaean battle between Christianity and atheism. Eisenhower's Labor Day speech announcing the launch of the Crusade, for example, condemned the Soviet Union's 'devilish libel', its 'evil broadcasts', its 'political wickedness', and the serpentine features of its 'hissing tirades' and 'communist venom'. While these rhetorical devices sought to leverage Christian majorities both in the United States and abroad – Italy in 1948 being the archetype – the Crusade can also be understood to have exploited Christian techniques of asserting pastoral forms of power over the American public.

[9] The invocation of the 'scroll' would have recalled the ongoing discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1946–56) at the time of the Crusade for Freedom.

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Figure 3.3 General Clay signs a freedom scroll (NCFE 1951a)

Since the posthumous publication of Foucault's later work on confession and avowal, scholars such as Stephen Legg (2016, 19) have considered 'how procedures of truth have existed and developed alongside other genealogies and institutions of liberal power'. On this account the Crusade for Freedom's drive to collect signatures on freedom scrolls can be understood precisely as a form of *avowal* – not only as an individual obligation to manifest truth abroad through the investment of truth dollars in Radio Free Europe, but also as an obligation to manifest truth about oneself. As the *New York Times*' coverage of Eisenhower's first Crusade speech suggests, the Crusade was 'a call upon all Americans to *re-dedicate themselves* to the cause of freedom', a reflexive act to 'affirm the signer's belief in world freedom' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950a, emphasis mine). As Eisenhower himself put it:

> In this Battle for Truth, you and I have a definite part to play. During the Crusade, each of us will have the opportunity to sign the Freedom Scroll. It bears a declaration of our faith in freedom, and of our belief in the dignity of the individual, who derives the right of freedom from God. Each of us, by signing the Scroll, pledges to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on Earth. Its words express what is in all our hearts. Your signature on it will be a blow for liberty. (Cited in *New York Times*, 5 September 1950b)

However, not everyone at NCFE supported the freedom scroll campaign. In a letter to Abbott Washburn dated 17 August 1950, Pete Carroll, Eisenhower's

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friend and speechwriter, criticised the effort. 'What good will signing a scroll do', he asked. 'Don't they want some money? Why not say so? … Aren't we aping the commies with this scroll business?' (cited in Medhurst 1997, 653). As Washburn later recalled of its planning stages, 'if we can get something that will raise money too, that [would be] great'. However, Washburn rejoined that 'it was clear that [the Committee's] first desire was involvement by the public to make this a volunteer thing'. While solicitation of funds for Radio Free Europe was central to the Committee's cover as a private venture, the campaign's real value was understood as its ability to involve US citizens in symbolic and moral acts of waging 'spiritual war' against communism. The collection of truth dollars and freedom scroll signatures was therefore primarily about the investment of individuals in the ideological project of anti-communism, what Foucault called the question of 'this strange truth that the individual must produce about himself' (Foucault 2014a, 19). By encouraging US citizens to actively produce discourses of anti-communism tied to avowals of self, the Crusade campaign sought to 'tie the individual to his truth, by his truth, and by his own enunciation of his own truth'.

More than a theoretical abstraction, the strategy of avowal was overt in the Crusade's public-facing communications. In a 6 September 1950 speech, Crusade leader General Lucius Clay insisted that 'those who contribute are doing more than to help the cause because in signing the pledge they are *rededicating themselves* to the principles of freedom in which we believe' (NCFE 1951a, emphasis mine). A 1951 Committee for a Free Europe pamphlet described the Crusade's mission as one to 'rededicate Americans to their heritage of freedom' (NCFE 1951c). Similarly, in concluding his 1950 Labor Day speech, Dwight Eisenhower emphasised the obligation of individuals to examine and govern their conscience, insisting that 'each must make it his responsibility to see that we remain strong morally, intellectually, materially … Ladies and Gentlemen, we must get tough – tough with ourselves' (*New York Times*, 5 September 1950a).

The theme of freedom was so central to the Crusade rhetoric that it presented itself as a kind of global abolitionist movement against the 'slavery' of the Soviet system. However, the Crusade also suggested the contradictory theme that some freedom would necessarily have to be surrendered for the war to be won. As Eisenhower put it during his Labor Day speech, 'success in such national crises always requires some temporary and partial surrender of individual freedom. But the surrender must be by our specific decision, and it must only be partial and only temporary.' The claim recalled Donovan and Mowrer's (1940) insistence that in the arena of psychological warfare, democracy was a uniquely vulnerable form of government since its constituents were nominally free to control the levers of government and national security. If it was a strange call for the voluntary surrender of freedom, it further illustrated Foucault's (2007) premise that liberal forms of government have been built upon 'the paradox of pastoral power' and voluntary

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obedience to the pastor as one who guides the examination of conscience. While the figure of the individual pastor recedes in the complexity of the modern world, the Crusade for Freedom illustrates what Foucault (2014a, 18) identifies as

> [the tendency] to tie the individual more and more to his truth (I mean, to the obligation to tell the truth about oneself), to make this truth-telling function in one's relationships to others, and to commit oneself through this truth which is told. I do not mean that the modern individual ceases to be bound to the will of the other who commands him; but more and more, this connection overlaps and is tied to a discourse of truth that the subject is led to maintain about himself.

One can see in the Crusade for Freedom precisely this effort to – as Legg (2016, 12) explains – 'obligate individuals to become essential actors in the manifestation of truth … both [as] operator, spectator and the object of truth acts'. In insisting that individuals could wage their own private spiritual war against communism, American psychological warfare adopted not only the symbolism of the Christian crusade, but also the logic of pastoral power. If the pastoral obligation to 'the will of the other who commands' became dispersed in the imagined community of the nation, it was precisely as a citizen of the United States that the Crusade obligated individuals to formulate truths about themselves. In the Crusade, the obligation of the American citizen to manifest truth abroad in psychological warfare against the Soviet Union became inextricably tied to the obligation to manifest a binding truth about oneself – what Deborah Cowen (2004) has identified as the paradoxical domestic intimacy of 'scaling the nation'. If the responsibility to examine and manifest truths about oneself represents a foundational practice of Christianity, in the Crusade for Freedom the obligation became central to the American geopolitical imagination of psychological warfare as a kind of internal and spiritual battle against a foreign Other.

A remarkable advertisement in the *New York Times* two weeks after Eisenhower's speech illustrated the stark pastoral logic of the Crusade (Figure 3.4). In an 'open letter' to Eisenhower, the president of a US furniture-making company authored a litany of self-avowals constructed around an examination and confession of conscience. 'I KNOW', the advertisement read, 'the Kremlin hates us for fear that the ideals of our FREEDOM might penetrate the minds of those they have oppressed.' 'I KNOW', it continued, 'I shall give my effort and all I can afford for this cause' (*New York Times*, 17 September 1950). Quite literally a catechism for Cold War, the advertisement can be understood as a kind of first-person 'discourse of truth on the self, formed through the examination of conscience'. In this pastoral imaginary, Eisenhower assumed the role of pastor, as one who binds the individual to the person who directs their conscience (Foucault 2007, 183).

Mirroring this confessional discourse, a staple of the Crusade for Freedom was the organisation of 'statement contests' in which winners were promised trips to Radio Free Europe headquarters in Munich to read their personal message to

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'the millions of people trapped behind the Iron Curtain'. Though begun in the early days of the Crusade, statement contests reached their height in the late 1950s, appearing in numerous advertisements, notably in *Reader's Digest*, whose owner Dewitt Wallace was an executive member of the Committee for a Free Europe. In an advertisement for the Crusade's 1959 statement contest, the US Advertising Council distributed press kits including a three-panel cartoon strip which was recommended for use in conjunction with advertising or editorial features in the contest (Cummings 2010b). Typical contest prompts included 'as an American, I support Radio Free Europe because …'; 'Why I want to participate in the Crusade for Freedom …'; or, as a *Reader's Digest* advertisement read (Figure 3.5), 'I believe the most important thing people behind the Iron Curtain should know is … .' The targets of such ads were often schoolchildren, who were encouraged to examine their conscience and 'speak with [their] hearts and heads'. Above all, the Crusade's myriad confessional techniques sought to obligate American citizens to produce and bind themselves to avowals of self that pitted them against communism in a spiritual struggle to defend the liberal-capitalist way of life.

Parting the Iron Curtain

Ask me how do I feel
Ask me now that we're cosy and clingin'
Well, sir, all I can say
Is if I were a bell, I'd be ringin'
From the moment we kissed tonight
That's the way I've just gotta behave

'If I Were a Bell', *Guys & Dolls*

'Quite a thrill to proceed under police escort! … Dignitaries [in Chicago] rang me … Had to break up [a] contest between Windy City policeman trying to prove who could ring me loudest and hardest … [In Phoenix], a series of rallies all day with [a] giant climaxing parade at night. Rang so much they wore me out!'

'If a Bell Could Speak', *Story of the World Freedom Bell*

While truth dollars and freedom scrolls served to introduce the US public to the Crusade for Freedom, perhaps its most recognisable and enduring symbol was the so-called Freedom Bell that adorned nearly all its promotional material. Like the scrolls and dollars, the Freedom Bell combined elements of US history with Christian imagery, in this case blending the Philadelphia Liberty Bell with the evangelising symbolism of the tolling church bell. The first Crusade for Freedom in 1950, originally envisioned as a one-year campaign, was designed around a national tour showcasing the Freedom Bell in the United States, before its trans-atlantic voyage and installation in the bell tower of Berlin's City Hall. In a series

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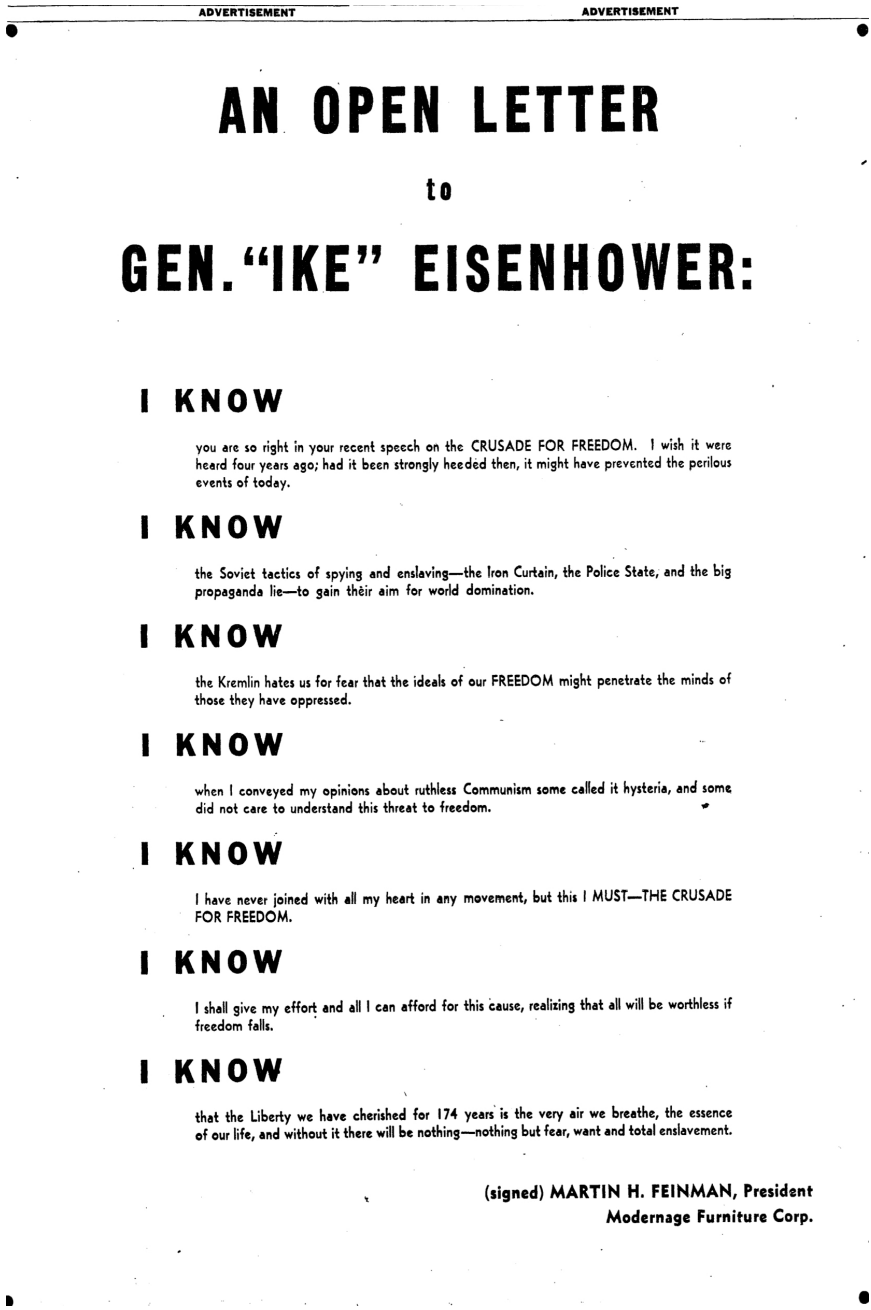

ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

AN OPEN LETTER

to

GEN. "IKE" EISENHOWER:

I KNOW

you are so right in your recent speech on the CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM. I wish it were heard four years ago; had it been strongly heeded then, it might have prevented the perilous events of today.

I KNOW

the Soviet tactics of spying and enslaving—the Iron Curtain, the Police State, and the big propaganda lie—to gain their aim for world domination.

I KNOW

the Kremlin hates us for fear that the ideals of our FREEDOM might penetrate the minds of those they have oppressed.

I KNOW

when I conveyed my opinions about ruthless Communism some called it hysteria, and some did not care to understand this threat to freedom.

I KNOW

I have never joined with all my heart in any movement, but this I MUST—THE CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM.

I KNOW

I shall give my effort and all I can afford for this cause, realizing that all will be worthless if freedom falls.

I KNOW

that the Liberty we have cherished for 174 years is the very air we breathe, the essence of our life, and without it there will be nothing—nothing but fear, want and total enslavement.

(signed) MARTIN H. FEINMAN, President
Modernage Furniture Corp.

Figure 3.4 A half-page personal ad taken out in the Sunday *New York Times* by the president of an American furniture company illustrated the spiritual and confessional structure of the Crusade for Freedom (*New York Times*, 17 September 1950)

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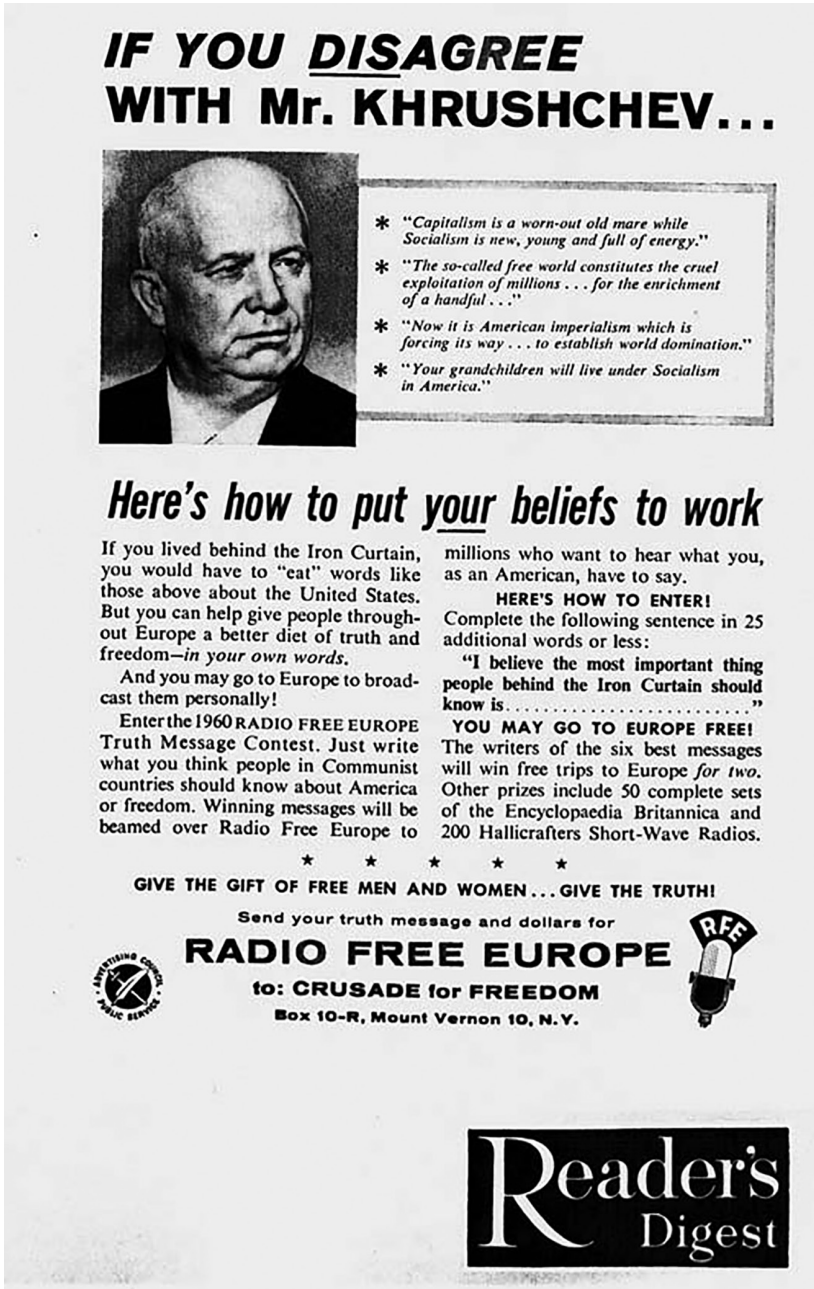

Figure 3.5 An advertisement in *Reader's Digest* for the Crusade statement contest taking aim at First Secretary Khrushchev (Friedman n.d.a)

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Figure 3.6 A scene of the Freedom Bell parade on Broadway in New York City (NCFE 1951a)

of highly orchestrated and publicised events, the Freedom Bell was originally produced at a foundry in Croydon, England, then shipped across the Atlantic, arriving in New York City on 6 September 1950 to a ticker-tape parade two days after Eisenhower's Labor Day radio speech announced the Crusade to the US public (Figure 3.6). Measuring over twelve feet high, and weighing over ten tons, the bell depicted five men holding outstretched hands, representing the apparent 'five major races of man' (*New York Times*, 7 September 1950). The bell's brim carried a globally reimagined adaptation of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, which stood as the Crusade's motto: 'that this world, under God, shall have a new birth of Freedom'.

As the major attraction of the first Crusade for Freedom, a rapid publicity tour across the United States followed its New York landing, with stops in twenty-six major cities (Figure 3.7). A motorcade truck was fitted to haul and display the bell, and stops on the tour became events for the promotion of the Crusade and the solicitation of truth dollars and scroll signatures. The signed scrolls were subsequently collected, made the journey across the country, and ultimately were enshrined in the base of the bell at its final destination in Berlin, where it remains today. At the conclusion of the first Crusade, the Freedom Bell in Berlin was fitted

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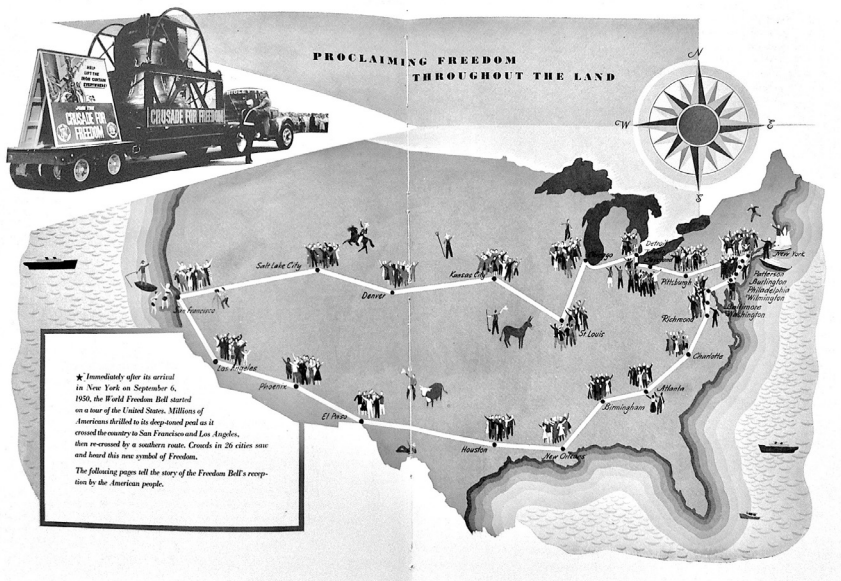

Figure 3.7 A map of the Freedom Bell's tour of the United States (NCFE 1951a)

with recording equipment that could 'carry its peal over the world' (*New York Times*, 7 September 1950). More specifically, the sound of the bell's ringing was used to announce segments on Radio Free Europe, a symbolic herald for the United States' Crusade over the airwaves in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Often described in terms of its 'penetrating' tones, the symbolism of penetration was consonant with the Crusade's broader emphasis on 'penetrating' the Iron Curtain with the potency of American 'truth'. If Carol Cohn's (1987) study of nuclear defence scientists has revealed the sexual imaginaries underwriting the everyday practices of defence contractors, a similar sexual politics underwrote the Crusade for Freedom's geopolitical imagination. In this imagination, the Crusade reflected not only a passive commitment to freedom, but also an aggressive imposition of the United States' will upon its geopolitical rival. In Radio Free Europe, the Crusade for Freedom therefore linked geopolitical imaginaries of psychological warfare with a kind of muscular Christianity underwritten by themes of sexual domination. If themes of muscular Christianity had previously served to construct geopolitical imaginations of psychological warfare as a kind of inner struggle and spiritual battle against the forces of an insidious and foreign enemy – an approximation of the baptismal battle with Satan – the Freedom Bell tied the Crusade's Christian themes to the symbol of Radio Free Europe as the unilateral imposition of a 'penetrating truth'. It condensed all the major themes of

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psychological warfare's moral economy: it was manly, it was true, it imposed order, and more than saving lives it offered *salvation*.

In the years following the second Crusade in 1951, Henry Ford II replaced General Clay as chairman of the Crusade amid concerns that the Crusade had become 'big business' and had strayed from its original purpose. In place of the Freedom Bell's tour of the United States during the first Crusade of 1950, the Ford Motor Company donated a fleet of flatbed trucks for use in a tour of the continental United States. Each truck's flatbed depicted an identical pageant scene dramatising the Freedom Bell's 'penetration' of the Iron Curtain with 'truth' carried over the airwaves of a Radio Free Europe transmitter (Figure 3.8). What became known as the 'Crusade for Freedom Motorcade' presented a pantomime of psychological warfare and a geopolitical imaginary of 'truth as a weapon' in contested and enemy territories. The motorcade provided, moreover, an 'excellent backdrop for newspaper publicity photos for the Crusade campaign and local citizens' (Friedman n.d.a).

Radio Free Europe was not, however, the only method the Crusade had contrived to 'penetrate' the Iron Curtain. Since Soviet transmitters regularly jammed the broadcasts of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe, a plan to float balloons carrying printed material into Eastern Europe was hatched by the Crusade in 1951. The balloons were made by General Mills, sponsors of the Crusade, connected most directly to it through OSS veteran Abbott Washburn. One estimate suggests that over half a million balloons were floated to Eastern

Figure 3.8 A pantomime scene of Radio Free Europe waging psychological war behind the Iron Curtain (Friedman n.d.a)

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Europe and beyond between 1951 and 1956, carrying over 300 million leaflets and other printed materials (Cummings 2010c). At the campaign's beginning in 1951, Czechoslovakia was a primary target for the Crusade's psychological war, having become a Communist country three years prior in 1948.

Present for the launch of the first balloons into Czechoslovakia was C. D. Jackson, who in an 8 October 1951 *Time* magazine article ('Winds' 1951) lionised the efforts of the Crusade. In an ongoing deception of the US public, Jackson portrayed the Crusade as a 'private international organization' that was 'tearing a hole in the iron curtain'. The article described Jackson on location at the balloon launch with Harold Stassen, a perennial failed presidential nominee for the Republican Party, and Drew Pearson, whose syndicated column 'Washington Merry-go-Round' was one the best known of the day. *Time* wrote that the men, personally releasing the first balloons, 'looking like three Statues of Liberty, held high above their heads big rubber balloons'. The balloons carried the standard second-person addresses of psychological war, hailing their Czech targets directly as political subjects:

> A new wind is blowing. New hope is stirring. Friends of freedom in other lands have found a new way to reach you. They know that you also want freedom. Millions of free men and women have joined together and are sending you this message of friendship over the winds of freedom … There is no dungeon deep enough to hide truth, no wall high enough to keep out the message of freedom. Tyranny cannot control the winds, cannot enslave your hearts. Freedom will rise again. (Friedman n.d.a)

Frequencies and schedules for Radio Free Europe were listed on the backs of the leaflets. RFE broadcasts in turn alerted listeners to the balloon drops and encouraged Czechoslovakians to collect and share the leaflets attached to them. 'What might the balloon barrage accomplish?', a *Time* magazine article asked ('Winds' 1951). 'So far', it responded, 'the Crusade for Freedom is not suggesting revolt … for revolt can be premature and disastrous. Instead, the balloons are an imaginative experiment in contact, bearing a message of hope until the time might be ripe for other words.' Though the article suggested that 'so far' the intent of the balloon launches was not to foment revolt, it intimated that a kind of 'people's uprising' directed by the Crusade was a matter not of if but when. The idea of a people-led grassroots capitalist revolution furthermore dovetailed with the broader US propaganda theme of a 'people's capitalism' and a corresponding if contradictory 'classless society' that would accompany it (Castillo 2010; Hixson 1998; Roholl 2012). C. D. Jackson himself was bullish on encouraging Eastern Europeans to revolt against the Soviet Union, as evinced in a 16 November 1953 letter to Allen Dulles in which he urged the United States to exploit projected food shortages in Czechoslovakia and Poland to encourage strikes and protests in what he called a 'winter of discontent' ('Fomenting Unrest' 1953).

After the launches, Stassen made the incredible claim that 'if the free world can send enough messages by radio and balloon, Soviet Russia will have to give up its present world policy, and the prospects for avoiding World War III will

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be considerably brighter' ('Freedom Crusade' 1951). Though hardly credible, the claim illustrates the extent to which psychological warriors wished for American audiences to believe in the 'power of truth' *qua* psychological warfare. Pearson was more taciturn, though he still argued in his nationally syndicated column on 17 August 1951 that the balloon campaign was a symbol of the 'free-enterprise system', illustrating the double function of the Crusade as propaganda both for itself and for a muscular capitalist system able to achieve what government bureaucracy could not. As Pearson wrote,

> the current experiment in penetrating the iron curtain by balloons may be a great success or it may fail. It is too early yet to say. But the important thing is that it's an attempt by private individuals under the free-enterprise system to try out certain methods of psychological propaganda – or call it psychological warfare if you will – which governments will not – and perhaps cannot tackle. (Cited in Cummings 2010c)

The targeting of Americans as a secondary audience of the 'Winds of Freedom' campaign was not limited to coverage of the Eastern European launches. As Pinkerton *et al.* (2011) note in their study of Project Revere, a collaborative research project between the University of Washington and the US Air Force, efforts to use American citizens as test subjects for researching the dissemination of psychological warfare leaflets often carried with them their own implicit psychological warfare messages. In the case of Project Revere, use of American citizens in research on leaflet dispersal doubled as illustrations for those citizens of their own vulnerability to aerial attack, compounding the Cold War climate of fear (Figure 3.9).

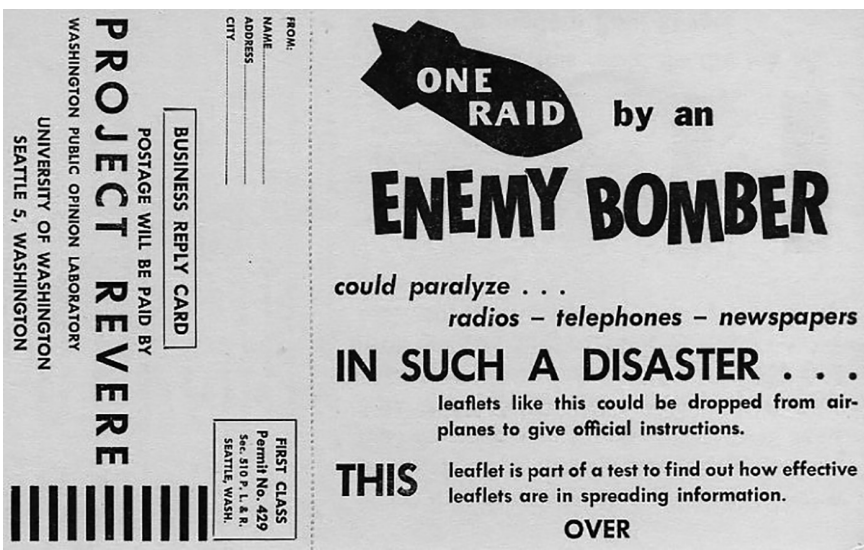

Figure 3.9 Project Revere postcard (Friedman n.d.b)

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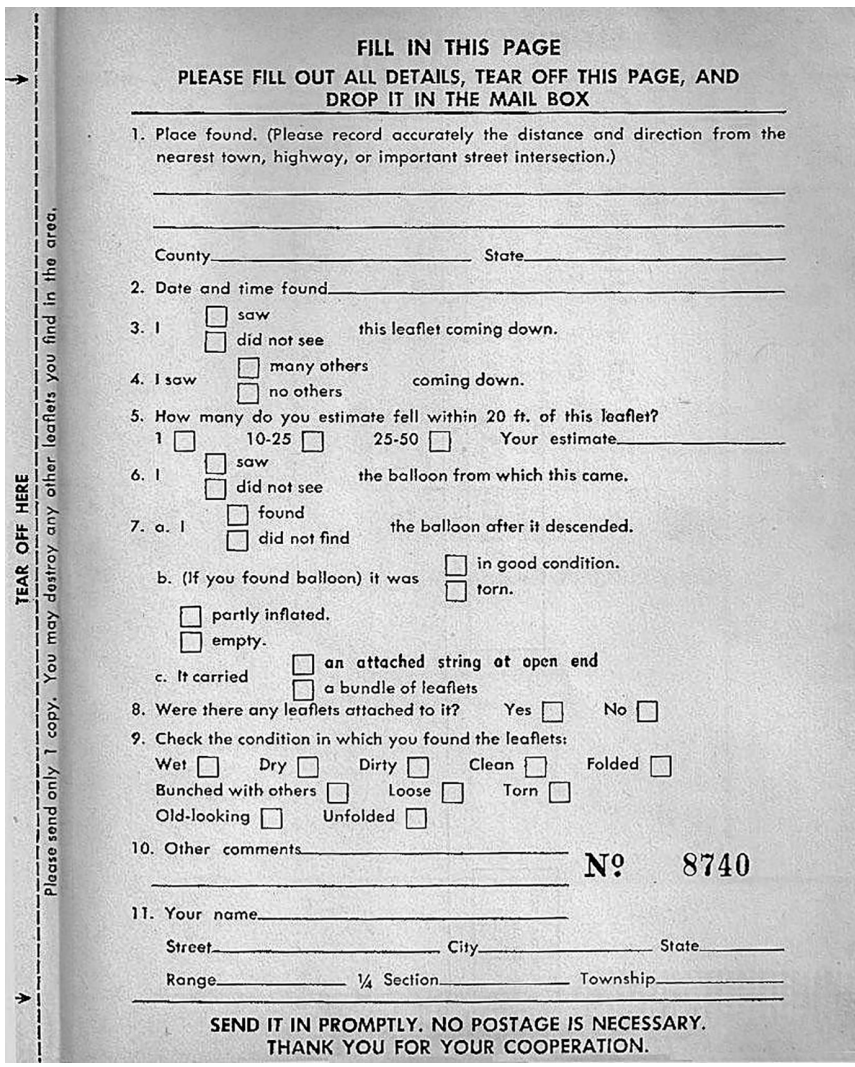
The use of balloons to spread domestic propaganda for the Crusade dates back to its earliest days, when a thousand balloons were launched from the Empire State Building to coincide with the Freedom Bell's departure from New York to Berlin in October 1950 (*New York Times*, 11 October 1950). Those balloons carried freedom scrolls and freedom dollar envelopes, but later balloons (such as the ones launched by General Mills from Sioux Falls, South Dakota) (Figure 3.10) carried information about the Winds of Freedom campaign and instructed readers to fill



FILL IN THIS PAGE

PLEASE FILL OUT ALL DETAILS, TEAR OFF THIS PAGE, AND DROP IT IN THE MAIL BOX

1. Place found. (Please record accurately the distance and direction from the nearest town, highway, or important street intersection.)

County_____ State_____

2. Date and time found_____

3. I ☐ saw ☐ did not see this leaflet coming down.

4. I saw ☐ many others ☐ no others coming down.

5. How many do you estimate fell within 20 ft. of this leaflet?
1 ☐ 10-25 ☐ 25-50 ☐ Your estimate_____

6. I ☐ saw ☐ did not see the balloon from which this came.

7. a. I ☐ found ☐ did not find the balloon after it descended.

b. (If you found balloon) it was ☐ in good condition. ☐ torn.
☐ partly inflated.
☐ empty.

c. It carried ☐ an attached string at open end ☐ a bundle of leaflets

8. Were there any leaflets attached to it? Yes ☐ No ☐

9. Check the condition in which you found the leaflets:
Wet ☐ Dry ☐ Dirty ☐ Clean ☐ Folded ☐
Bunched with others ☐ Loose ☐ Torn ☐
Old-looking ☐ Unfolded ☐

10. Other comments_____

No. 8740

11. Your name_____
Street_____ City_____ State_____
Range_____ ¼ Section_____ Township_____

SEND IT IN PROMPTLY. NO POSTAGE IS NECESSARY.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

TEAR OFF HERE
Please send only 1 copy. You may destroy any other leaflets you find in the area.

Figure 3.10 General Mills survey leaflet (Friedman n.d.a)

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out a short questionnaire on the location, time, and nature of their discovery of the leaflets. Like Project Revere, Crusade balloons transformed American citizens into participant subjects of Cold War research on balloon propaganda dissemination, with the double function of acclimating the American public to a geopolitical imaginary of a global psychological war in which they played an active part. The leaflets again stressed *participation*: 'to millions in Soviet captivity, leaflets like this mean hope and encouragement … to make this test a success, your cooperation is vital'.

The mighty Wurlitzer

In one of its promotional hardcover 'blue books', the Crusade for Freedom claimed that 'the best evidence of the Freedom Bell's effectiveness as a psychological weapon were the angry denunciations and lies evoked from Moscow', which had called the Crusade's signature drive 'a parody of a public movement' (NCFE 1951a). Since comprehensive public opinion polling in enemy territories was often impossible to conduct, psychological warriors regularly contented themselves with pointing to denunciations of their efforts by enemy leaders as proof of their efficacy. While the Crusade booklet relished what it presented as Soviet outrage over the 'ludicrous masquerade' of the Crusade and the 'false peals' of the Freedom Bell, what the Crusade did not reveal about Soviet denunciations was that they correctly identified Radio Free Europe as a front for the CIA (Panfilov 1981).

By contrast, the fact that the Committee for a Free Europe was organised and funded by the CIA was not revealed to the American public until 1967, after the small San Francisco-based left-wing publication *Ramparts* published a story on CIA infiltration of the National Students Association. The surprising revelation from the fringe publication prompted larger papers to pursue the story, and the *New York Times* eventually published reporting linking Radio Free Europe to the CIA (Cone 1998, 152), a full seventeen years after the Committee for a Free Europe was formed. Ironically, the listening audiences of Radio Free Europe in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc would have known, or at least would have been told, that the broadcasts were the work of the CIA, meaning the constituency most deceived about the Radio's true origins were American citizens, many of whom donated money to the cause of 'telling the truth' to the 'enslaved peoples' of Eastern Europe.

As Cone (1998, 148) notes, 'the unmasking of RFE and RL [Radio Liberty] is significant partly because it took so long, but more so because the press and broadcast media were, in many cases, well aware of the connection between the CIA and the stations, and simply chose not to report the link'. As recounted by Sig Mickelson (1983, 125), former president of CBS and subsequently of Radio

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Free Europe itself, many American journalists and editors were aware that RFE and the Committee for a Free Europe were covers for the CIA but 'kept their lips and typewriters sealed'. When it came to supporting the Crusade, however, the American media were effusive. Cone's (1998, 149) study suggests that the value of advertising and public service announcement space donated to the Crusade by the American press was between nine and seventeen million dollars. In 1955 a Crusade newsletter boasted that more than 450 newspapers carried 700 Crusade ads, and that 75 per cent of major American newspapers ran supportive articles or editorials during the 1955 campaign.

Additionally, many journalists and media executives sat on boards and worked in the newsrooms of Radio Free Europe (Cone 1998), including future USIA director Edward R. Murrow, television personality Ed Sullivan, and prominent journalist Walter Cronkite.[10] Leland Stowe, the fifth column alarmist reporter who helped fabricate the Ewald Banse controversies of 1933 and 1941, was the head of Radio Free Europe's News and Information department during the 1950s and actively recruited journalists to the station. Working his niche warning Americans of clandestine foreign plots conspiring to victimise them, Stowe published several books after the Second World War, employing the second-person trope for his *Target: You* (1949) as well as *Conquest by Terror: The Story of Satellite Europe* (1952).

It was, however, Henry Luce's media empire that was most influential in advertising the Crusade and valorising the geopolitical imaginary of waging global psychological war. This was perhaps unsurprising given *Time–Life–Fortune* Vice President C. D. Jackson's central role in the Crusade, in Radio Free Europe, and later in the Eisenhower administration. In a seminal report to President Eisenhower in 1953, Jackson stressed that the value of keeping Radio Free Europe's CIA connection secret lay in its ability to 'take positions for which the United States would not desire to accept responsibility' ('President's Committee' 1953). Again, the virtue of Radio Free Europe was its ability to leverage government resources to subvert overt government norms, channels, and regulations. Though other *Time–Life–Fortune* executives were involved with Radio Free Europe, Jackson was by far the most influential and active. His departures from the company to work with government and the CIA were so frequent that a playfully named 'Fun and Games Committee of the C. D. Jackson Hello & Goodbye Society' was established to celebrate the occasions (Cook 1984, 43) (Figure 3.11).

[10] Cronkite volunteered to narrate a 1957 film advertising the Crusade and Radio Freedom called Towers of Truth, approved by CBS president Frank Stanton, a long-time psychological warrior who was instrumental in constructing psychological warfare as a member of the Committee for National Morale in 1941, Chairman of the Board of the RAND corporation from 1961–7, and an advisor to the USIA who was sent to Vietnam to advise on how it could 'reduce the high visibility of the American mission abroad' (Schiller 1969, 269). See Crusade for Freedom (1957).

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Figure 3.11 C. D. Jackson (NCFE 1951a)

Among Jackson's other forays into government work was his role on President Truman's Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), a short-lived agency coordinating psychological war policy and planning across government agencies. In May 1952, Jackson organised members of the board to convene at Princeton University, inviting representatives from the CIA, the State Department, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Princeton University. Also present for the articulation of what became the 'Princeton Agenda' were Allen Dulles and Walter Rostow, who were joined in consensus that the United States should engage in a more aggressive programme of psychological warfare against the Soviet Union ('Princeton Statement' 1952). Though at the end of his presidency Truman did not take up the Princeton Agenda, in 1952 Jackson briefed candidate Eisenhower on the meeting. Both Jackson and Eisenhower had a 'shared belief that psychological warfare was essential to military strategy' (Stern 2012, 12) which dated back to the winter of 1942, when Jackson was flown to North Africa to manage the public relations disaster of Eisenhower's collaboration with Vichy General Darlan. The Darlan affair began a 'long and close association' between the two men, which continued in their collaboration on the Crusade for Freedom and solidified early in Eisenhower's presidency.

Building upon his advocacy for the Crusade, presidential candidate Eisenhower invoked the moral economy of psychological warfare, posing it as an alternative to

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armed conflict. In an 8 October 1952 campaign speech, he spoke on the importance of the 'struggle for the minds and wills of men':

> We must adapt our foreign policy to a 'cold war' strategy that is unified and coherent … In spirit and resolve, we should see in this 'cold war' a chance to gain a victory without casualties, to win a contest that can quite literally save the peace. (*New York Times*, 9 October 1952)

A week after his election as president in November 1952, Eisenhower gave his third Crusade for Freedom radio speech in an event hosted by new Crusade chairman Henry Ford II. In the same broadcast, his defeated opponent Adlai Stevenson made clear that support for the Crusade was a bipartisan affair, warning Democrats not to 'sit back and lose the war of ideas by default'. Hewing close to Crusade talking points, Stevenson praised Radio Free Europe for going beyond the restrictions of what a government agency could do. 'Imagine yourself', he said, 'behind the Iron Curtain. Bombarded constantly and from all sides by official propaganda, how could you fail to be more impressed by the one voice in the chorus that is voluntary?' (*New York Times*, 12 November 1952). Reproducing the Crusade logic that contrasted private voluntarism to the 'tyranny of government', Stevenson joined Eisenhower in praising the Crusade for 'penetrating the Iron Curtain'.

Early in his presidency, Eisenhower convened a Committee on International Information Activities to review and plan the United States' psychological warfare policy. Colloquially known as the Jackson Committee for its chair William Harding Jackson, a New York attorney and Deputy Director of the CIA, the Committee was also attended by C. D. Jackson, arguably the more influential of the two Jacksons, serving as Eisenhower's new Special Assistant to the President on psychological warfare. The Jackson Committee's classified report to the president on 30 June 1953 urged the maintenance of the CIA's cover as Radio Free Europe's benefactor. Perhaps most lastingly, the Committee recommended the consolidation of American psychological warfare efforts, leading to the establishment of the United States Information Agency the next month. Despite the massive expansion of American psychological warfare represented by the establishment of the USIA, the Jackson Committee recommended the wholesale abandonment of the *term* 'psychological warfare'. A White House press release on the report called it an 'unfortunate term' that did 'not describe the efforts of our nation to build a world of peace and freedom'. The term, the release continued, should be discarded 'in favor of others that describe our true goal' (*New York Times*, 9 July 1953). As C. D. Jackson complained years later to William Harding Jackson,

> over and over again thousands of characters – mostly military characters – have got to have explained to them that psychological warfare is not an occult science practiced on a couch, but just one of many clubs in the bag of the Foreign Minister or the military commander … We sure have been ruined by that word 'psychological'. (Cited in Granville 2005, 811)

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Through the committee, C. D. Jackson dismantled the PSB on which he had served under Truman and attempted to banish use of the term which he had done so much to build in the years before American entry into the Second World War. While the report is said to have 'dropped like a bombshell' (Perusse 1958, 25) on the characters – the mostly military characters – who had begun to institutionalise psychological warfare at places such as Johns Hopkins University's Operations Research Office, the Jackson report in fact called for the massive *expansion* of psychological warfare and an acknowledgement of its *intractability* from all policy formation. As the Jackson report suggested,

> the directive which created the Psychological Strategy Board assumes that in addition to national objectives formulated by the National Security Council, there are such things as 'over-all national psychological objectives' … The PSB directive also speaks of 'psychological policies' and the Board has been working to develop 'a strategic concept for psychological operations'. We believe these phrases indicate a basic misconception, for we find that the 'psychological' aspect of policy is not separable from policy, but is inherent in every diplomatic, economic or military action. ('President's Committee' 1953)

The term 'psychological warfare' sat uneasily with the American public, perhaps unsurprisingly given the lengths to which figures such as C. D. Jackson and William Donovan had gone to portray German psychological warfare in the 1940s as a kind of 'witch doctor' mind control. In consolidating the OWI's infrastructure of information outposts around the world, the new USIA would abandon the bogey of psychological warfare and instead take up the mantle of its predecessor's 'strategy of truth', a rhetorical strategy already heavily evidenced by the CIA's Crusade for Freedom. As with the OWI, the USIA's strategy of truth was premised on the dissimulation of propaganda in the tones and format of objective and factual news reporting. In an attempt to avoid the dissemination of outright fabrications, the USIA's strategy of truth would seek to assert governmental power through the control of *circulation* through the 'particular selection and treatment of news designed to present a full exposition of US actions and policies, especially as they affect the particular country addressed' ('President's Committee' 1953).

The production and selection of news for the 'particular country addressed' was a significant recommendation of the Jackson report. While the Jackson Committee purported to dismantle American psychological warfare, it in fact signalled not only its massive expansion, but also a concurrent refinement and specification of its targets. In place of expensive American staffers producing general news stories about the United States, the USIA would now employ local producers in its various countries of operation to 'adapt all broadcasting and information activities to the needs of each target country'. In place of generic broadcasts by the Voice of America, the new USIA represented a revolution in erstwhile American

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psychological warfare that would tailor efforts to the individual country addressed, mirroring the larger Cold War movement towards more localised and applied area studies (Barnes & Farish 2006).

In another watershed recommendation, the Jackson Committee suggested a new policy of non-attribution: 'as a general rule, information and propaganda should only be attributed to the United States when such attribution is an asset. A much greater percentage of the information program should be unattributed' ('President's Committee' 1953). Though some argued that unattributed materials, so long as they remained 'true', could be considered 'white' propaganda operations, misattribution was generally understood as a 'black' propaganda tactic, by convention the province of covert agencies such as the OSS and the CIA. Despite its advertisement of a 'strategy of truth', the USIA was from its conception envisioned as a quasi-covert agency. It was perhaps appropriate that C. D. Jackson chose 1 April 1954 as the day he resigned as advisor to the President on psychological warfare, having played an instrumental role in crystallising the global expansion of unattributed American propaganda under the banner of 'dismantling American psychological warfare'.

Conclusion: Psywar is dead, long live psywar!

With the creation of the United States Information Agency, erstwhile supporters of psychological warfare sought to reassure the American public that the worst excesses of psychological war had been put to rest. As former Secretary of the Department of the Air Force Thomas K. Finletter (1954, 126) put it:

> Psychological Warfare is a bad term because the word 'warfare' implies that deceit is justifiable if it serves our purpose. Deceit is standard practice in the tactics of war. It is not correct practice in peacetime, whether it be directed toward our own people, to our friends, to those who have not taken sides, or to the people enslaved by Russia and China. It is neither consistent with our principles nor is it good business. Psychological warfare had its extravagances a while but they have been put to rest by the definitive report of a committee headed by William H. Jackson which recommended that the US give up psychological warfare.

However, the reports of psychological warfare's death were greatly exaggerated. As Finletter continued, 'this is not to say that psychological warfare should not continue as a military tactic nor that the US should stop explaining its policies to its Allies, to the neutrals, and to the enslaved peoples, providing the explanations are meticulously truthful' (p. 16). Finletter's Janus-faced comments reflected the tension between an inward-facing consensus that psychological warfare was a necessary component of foreign policy, and the outward-facing need to appear to rein in psychological warfare during peacetime. As ever, the invocation of the

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'strategy of truth' served to suspend this contradiction and legitimate the massive expansion of psychological warfare through the USIA.

A strikingly candid assessment of this squaring of the circle was written in 1954 by Roland Perusse (1958, 32), an officer at the newly established USIA. In his estimation, 'the principal lesson to be derived from the reappraisal of psychological warfare … is that the term itself had best be avoided in any characterization of either our informational output or our foreign relations generally'. Noting the weariness of the US public on the issue of psychological war, Perusse wrote that

> we have not always had the opportunity to explain that by 'warfare' we have meant 'peacefare' and we have necessarily assumed a ridiculous posture (something akin to the Communist corruption of word meanings) every time that we have made the attempt. In brief, those in the business of explaining US policies abroad through a judicious choice of word symbols had failed to choose an appropriate word symbol ['psychological warfare'] to characterize their operations.

One early candidate to replace psychological warfare at the terminological level was offered by the social psychologist Leonard Cottrell (1958, 20), for whom the term 'political communication' reflected a flattened sense of neutrality and objectivity. For Cottrell, 'political communication' emphasised the intractability of persuasion from all information, a principle that dovetailed with the emergent ideology that a market-based 'free flow of ideas' should govern the United States' approach to erstwhile psychological war. As Cottrell argued,

> a large proportion of what we label psychological warfare falls well within what democratic cultures guarantee as an inalienable right – namely to convince other people that you are right and that they are wrong. Indeed, we are committed to the technique of the free-for-all competition of ideas as a way of crystallizing our opinions on public issues. The kind of reciprocity implied in this concept might well make the Politburo nervous.

While no one term came to denote the former practice of psychological warfare until the mid-1960s, when 'public diplomacy' offered what Cull (2006, n.p.) calls an 'alternative to the anodyne term information [and the] malignant term propaganda', consensus within the family of psychological warriors held that psychological war by any other name would remain an integral part of US foreign policy.

Propaganda theorists such as Harold Lasswell (1951) now claimed that 'peacefare and warfare [were] the two patterns which are assumed in the instruments of total policy at all times'. If some reached merely for euphemisms to soften the bellicosity of the term 'psychological war', others sought to retain and rehabilitate the concept as such. As Roland Perusse (1958, 33) put it, 'abandonment of the term should by no means result in the abandonment of any of the processes involved in what has been known professionally as 'psychological warfare'. Insisting that there would always be a need for 'psychological intelligence'

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provided by anthropologists, sociologists, and area specialists, Perusse (1958, 34) recommended a purely partisan solution to the terminological problem:

> It is better to let the term [propaganda] ride as a proper definition for totalitarian efforts and to characterize the activities of democratic societies as 'information'. From a strictly academic point of view, the distinction is not valid; but from a practical and public relations point of view, the entire task of dealing with foreign peoples will be made easier if we go along with the tide of public opinion … From a strictly professional viewpoint, [the USIA] is 'psychological warfare', pure and simple, as everyone who has engaged in any aspect of such activity will recognize, but for the better chances of its success, it would appear wise not to call it that, but rather, as recommended by the President's Committee, to concentrate on finding other terms that describe our true goals.

This chapter has considered the arc of psychological warfare's evolution from the immediate post-war context of Allied occupation, to the 'caution and uncertainty' of the post-war years, to its eventual adoption by the CIA. Like the original construction of psychological warfare a decade earlier by actors surrounding William Donovan's OSS, the construction of psychological war in the early 1950s was an ouroboric project – propaganda about propaganda. The façade of private American investment and participation in psychological warfare had the effect of hailing Soviet and Eastern European individuals as recipients of communications not from the United States government, but from concerned American citizens. However, it had the double function of compelling the same American citizens to reflect upon and posit themselves as actors in the arena of psychological warfare.

In tracing the contours of the Crusade for Freedom's various efforts to mobilise the American public, this chapter has shown that American psychological warfare attempted to employ a confessional strategy to 'make speak' and to obligate Americans to articulate and conform to truths about themselves. I argue that these avowals of American selfhood were understood by the Crusade's architects as crucial hinges between waging psychological warfare abroad and mobilising Americans for a 'spiritual war' against communism in which Americans again found themselves to be both objects and subjects. Central to these 'technologies of the self' were injunctions for Americans to conceive and posit their political agency in the symbolic terms of economic exchange and speech, namely the truth dollar and the freedom scroll. Here again, psychological warfare sought to obscure domestic monopolies of knowledge through recourse to a liberal political imaginary, with the dollar and the scroll becoming new ciphers for freedom of industry and speech. These were accompanied by muscular Christian themes in which communication media such as Radio Free Europe became 'weapons' for the 'penetration' of the minds and borders of communist Eastern Europe.

While the creation of the USIA in 1953 represented a massive expansion of its predecessor's global psychological warfare apparatus, its establishment coincided,

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ironically, with a disavowal of the increasingly unpopular term 'psychological warfare' to describe American propaganda activities abroad. Mirroring the way that the language of psychological warfare replaced the unpopular language of propaganda, I have shown how the abandonment of terminology surrounding psychological warfare nonetheless involved an entrenchment of both its practice and the geopolitical imaginations cultivating it. I have emphasised throughout the continued role of *Time–Life–Fortune* Vice President C. D. Jackson and other OSS veterans in subsuming psychological cold war within a superseding geopolitical imagination of a proselytising 'strategy of truth'. In the next chapter I trace the re-emergence of psychological warfare at the USIA within the context of President John Kennedy's articulation of the United States' global counterinsurgency strategy and its prosecution in Vietnam through the offices of the Joint United States Public Affairs Office.

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4

Psywar in Vietnam

After the Second World War, veterans of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Office of War Information (OWI) began to formalise the theory and practice of psychological warfare. Books such as Daniel Lerner's (1949) *The Sykewar Campaign* and Paul Linebarger's (1948) *Psychological Warfare* became foundational texts. Beginning in 1953, the first three comprehensive volumes on psychological warfare were published by Johns Hopkins University's Operations Research Office (ORO). The office was established at Fort McNair in Washington, DC, in 1948 before being moved to Chevy Chase, Maryland, in 1952. At this second location, ORO entered into a contract with Johns Hopkins University to 'provide an atmosphere that would attract the best minds to ORO'; 'create an atmosphere of intellectual independence'; and 'create a university atmosphere conducive to good scientific research' (Office of Technology Assessment 1995, 17, 20). When the Korean War began in 1950, it was seen as an opportunity to 'provide ORO with a laboratory for their work'. Field representatives were sent by ORO to Korea to study various aspects of operations research, including extensive evaluations of 'close air support', the utilisation of 'indigenous manpower', and the effectiveness of leaflets and other forms of combat propaganda now called psychological warfare.

Though C. D. Jackson's attempt to abolish the term 'psychological warfare' in the wider diplomatic community had 'dropped like a bombshell' on those attempting to formalise its theory and practice, the Korean War renewed military interest in it. However, debates over whether or not psychological warfare should be a military or a civilian responsibility slowed the formalisation of psychological war doctrine in the military and led to what Wilbur Schramm (1953, v) called a 'lack of organization of knowledge and theory of psychological warfare'. While the Department of the Army was initially hesitant to assume responsibility for psychological warfare, in 1951 the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base held a conference on the topic. Arranged by the Air University's Human Resources Research Institute, the conference led to the commission of the three ORO volumes from Johns Hopkins.

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The series began with *The Nature of Psychological Warfare* by OWI veteran and Communication Studies pioneer Wilbur Schramm (1953); this was followed by *Target Analysis and Media in Propaganda to Audiences Abroad* by Alfred de Grazia (1954), a pioneer of computer-based network analysis and a Second World War Army psychological warfare veteran; and the final volume was *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* (Daugherty & Janowitz 1958), a comprehensive collection with contributions from nearly every major figure in the young field of psychological war. These texts largely followed Linebarger's historiography of psychological warfare, representing a sharp turn away from the American intelligence community's insistence in the early 1940s that psychological warfare had produced a 'new reality' and indeed a 'new geography of defense' (Chapter 1).

In place of the alarmism surrounding psychological warfare's purported novelty, a new consensus emerged that psychological warfare had *always* existed, though it had been imperfectly recognised. Schramm's (1953, 5) *The Nature of Psychological Warfare* reproduced Linebarger's vignettes on psychological warfare's ancient origins and stressed the titular sense of its *natural* existence:

> [P]sychological warfare is one of the means nations use to promote their policies and objectives vis-à-vis the outside world. Nations have been waging it ever since there have been nations (although psychological warfare does happen to be a new name for it), but it has only recently come to be regarded as a distinct government activity that ought to be performed by specially trained professionals.

While deception, coercion, and persuasion may be 'as old as nations', this new construction of 'psychological warfare' as something that had always existed served to efface the contingency of its construction in the early 1940s, an effort ironically made by many of the same actors who had constructed it as 'Hitler's frightening new weapon'. It resembled what Foucault (1977a) called a 'search for origins', an attempt to prefigure the reality and existence of psychological warfare, rather than interrogate the specific conditions and circumstances under which it arose. In this sense, the post-war body of literature on psychological warfare offered a kind of political historiography that sought to efface the contingency of psychological warfare's contemporary emergence through the invention of an ancient and mythologised past. The imperative to discover the historical 'nature' of psychological warfare furthermore provided ballast to claims that it was an obligatory military function in need of research and appropriations.

In addition to naturalising psychological warfare as an eternal aspect of 'war itself', Schramm (1953, 11) sought to collapse the definitional parameters of psychological warfare into matters of *intent*. 'Almost any military action may have a psywar aspect', he wrote. 'A bomb on a gun emplacement may help persuade another gun crew to run or surrender … If these things happen incidentally,

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without being intended by the attackers, they probably should not be called psywar. But if they are intended to be understood as conveying such and such a message, they are psywar.' The virtue of such a definition was that it could be simultaneously everything and nothing, a point about which Schramm was, among psychological warriors, uncharacteristically candid:

> [T]he reader will already have guessed the general shape of the definition to which we have been leading up: psychological warfare is the whole range of functions performed by psychological warriors, whether inside or outside duly constituted psywar agencies (The pilot of a plane flying a psywar mission is engaged in psywar and is, for the moment at least, a psychological warrior). It is, admittedly, a 'circular' definition, but it has the advantage of excluding nothing that the psychological warrior ought to think of as part of the over-all enterprise in which he is engaged. (Schramm, 1953, 12)

For the fledgling field of psychological warfare, it provided both a limitless mandate and a frictionless exculpability, since its very existence was relegated to the subjectivity of the operator. If, in the early years of the Second World War, epistemological critique was exploited to simultaneously preserve, destroy, and supersede the 'strategy of truth' (Chapter 2), here again a rhetorical sleight of hand defined the ontology of psychological warfare, not in its material practice, but in the abstract terms of ideology and intent. As the co-editor of the third volume of the ORO texts quipped, 'most people who write or talk about psychological warfare use the term as Humpty Dumpty did in his discussion with Alice concerning "glory". He told her, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more or less"' (Daugherty 1958a, 11).

The United States Information Agency and the counterinsurgency turn

Under President Dwight Eisenhower, psychological warfare expanded in its new dualistic structure between the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) covert operations and the newly established United States Information Agency's (USIA) grey 'strategy of truth' (Chapter 3). Upon taking the presidency in 1961, John F. Kennedy appointed the famed journalist Edward R. Murrow as the new director of the USIA. Though Murrow is often remembered as the face of anti-McCarthyism in the 1950s, as director of the USIA he in fact held the top post in the United States' 'war of ideas' against communism. While many in the intelligence community were dismayed over the extremism of the McCarthy hearings – C. D. Jackson, for instance, agonised over the damage McCarthyism had done to the United States' international image (Stern 2012, 87) – opposition to McCarthy in no way suggested opposition to anti-communism as such, and

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many were concerned that McCarthy was in fact *harming* the respectability of the anti-communist movement.[1]

As director of the USIA, Murrow oversaw a sea change in the organisation's approach to fighting communism increasingly tied to the emergent policy of Kennedy's 'global counterinsurgency' against communist revolution. A secret directive from Kennedy to Murrow in January 1963 made explicit the USIA's new role as a direct arm of this counterinsurgency policy. A transcript of a 22 August 1963 meeting between Murrow and the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, declassified only in 2007, offers a glimpse of the directive's content. Noting that the meeting was 'the first time much of this has been even reduced to writing', Murrow (1963b) conveyed to the Special Group the secret directive's 'unprecedented' nature. 'It is an unprecedented document', said Murrow, 'not only for what it says, but for what it does NOT say as well':

> Our mission is, '… to help achieve United States foreign policy objectives …' It does NOT say we are to make friends for the United States. It does not say publicize our activities, create a climate of opinion, wage a campaign of truth, tell the story of America abroad, tell the full and fair picture, or any of the other vague generalities that have described our actives in by-gone years. It makes us a distinctly foreign policy oriented agency. (Emphasis in original)

The secret directive signalled an important shift in the mission and focus of the USIA from platitudinous 'story-telling' to the pursuit and support of specific policy goals in specific target countries.[2] These policy goals revolved primarily around the maintenance and support of allied governments in so-called counterinsurgency countries where the United States wished to prop up political leaders against popular left-wing insurgencies, both political and military. In these countries, Murrow noted, USIA programmes would now be 'designed for internal information and propaganda needs rather than being primarily concerned with American policy positions'. In other words, the USIA's mission shifted from one concerned with advertising and 'winning friends' for the United States, to one concerned with the maintenance of friendly political regimes as bulwarks against communist revolutions.

The Special Group on Counterinsurgency was itself a recent creation of the Kennedy administration, a product of National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 124 of 18 January 1962. Heading the group was the president's brother, US Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and General Maxwell Taylor, an important

[1] Allen Dulles also 'stood up' to McCarthy when the latter attacked the CIA, especially over the issue of CIA agent Cord Meyer Jr's activity in left-wing politics in the 1930s (Stern 2012, 89). Others feared that McCarthy would blow Radio Free Europe's CIA cover. See Miller (1973); Saunders (1999); Thomas (1996).

[2] Non-critical histories of the USIA often repeat the claim that it was an overt and truthful information agency that existed to tell the platitudinous 'American story' during the Cold War. Laudatory accounts of the USIA have tended to reproduce these tropes. See Arndt (2005); Cull (2008); Wang (2007).

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figure in the Vietnam War's history and escalation. The Special Group was formed as an interagency committee to discuss, research, and coordinate plans for combating communist insurgencies around the globe, though its primary areas of emphasis were South America and East Asia (notably Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam). Other members of the Special Group on Counterinsurgency included representatives from the Department of State, the CIA, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). NSAM 124 further ordered civilian and military officials to attend a five-week National Interdepartmental Seminar on 'Problems of Development and Internal Defense', to which Murrow (1963a) contributed a paper on 'The Role of the USIA in Modernization and Internal Defence' on 31 July 1963.

As McGeorge Bundy (1964) wrote to the heads of the major American foreign policy agencies, 'internal defense' – assisting allied foreign leaders in suppressing popular political movements – was an increasingly 'interdepartmental foreign policy problem'. To meet this interdepartmental challenge, the Special Group on Counterinsurgency organised a series of National Interdepartmental Seminars meant to facilitate the development and coordination of counterinsurgency policy among officials in key positions. As Bundy (1964) wrote in NSAM 283,

> the National Interdepartmental Seminar will be the interagency training center for those officers assigned to 'key positions'. In performing this function, the Seminar will undertake research, develop case studies, and offer instruction on the manifold problems of development and internal defense … The Seminar will serve as the focal point of the US overseas internal defense training effort. Accordingly, it will undertake to assist other more specialized US Government institutions engaged in related training activities by developing instructional materials on the non-technical aspects of internal defense and counterinsurgency.

Bundy's memo stressed that organisation for internal defence required instruction on the 'concept and operation of the Country Team'. Reflecting the post-war ascendency of Area Studies (see Child & Barnes 2019), Country Teams were organised around the production of so-called country plans (Figure 4.1), increasingly the unit of US foreign policy analysis. As the USIA's representative to the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, Murrow's (1963b) role was to 'spell out our [USIA] policy role in individual countries' and to coordinate on the design of programmes 'tailored for the special needs of a single country'. As part of these broader interdepartmental country plans, USIA-specific country plans typically consisted of five parts: a statement of country-specific objectives, a list of USIA capabilities, a list of psychological objectives, identification of target audiences, and an overview of programme activities. Emphasising the USIA's break with 'more general considerations that tend to vagueness and diffusion', the country plan now became the basic unit of US psychological war strategy, a 'means of zeroing in on what is important in each locale'.

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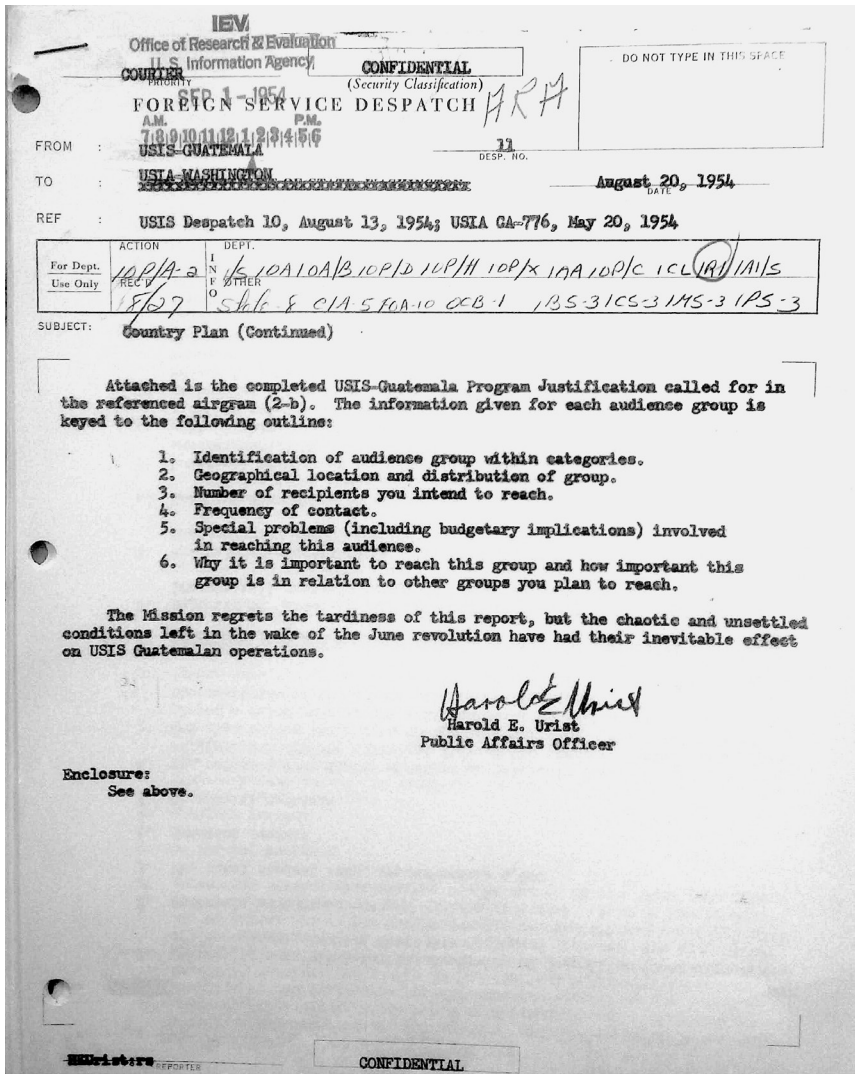

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REF : USIS Despatch 10, August 13, 1954; USIA GA-776, May 20, 1954

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	10P/A-2	INFO 1/S 10A 10A/B 10P/D 10P/H 10P/X 10A 10P/C 1CL 1R1 1A1/S
	REC'D 8/27	OTHER State-8 CIA-5 FOA-10 OCB-1 1BS-3 1CS-3 1MS-3 1PS-3

SUBJECT: Country Plan (Continued)

Attached is the completed USIS-Guatemala Program Justification called for in the referenced airgram (2-b). The information given for each audience group is keyed to the following outline:

1. Identification of audience group within categories.
2. Geographical location and distribution of group.
3. Number of recipients you intend to reach.
4. Frequency of contact.
5. Special problems (including budgetary implications) involved in reaching this audience.
6. Why it is important to reach this group and how important this group is in relation to other groups you plan to reach.

The Mission regrets the tardiness of this report, but the chaotic and unsettled conditions left in the wake of the June revolution have had their inevitable effect on USIS Guatemalan operations.

Harold E. Urist
Harold E. Urist
Public Affairs Officer

Enclosure:
See above.

REPORTER
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Figure 4.1 USIA country plan: Guatemala (USIA 1954a)

Establishing government

In its new advisory capacity to the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, the USIA became an agency dedicated to the practice of counterinsurgency, and thereby to the project of creating and strengthening relationships of government between the populations and the leadership of target countries. As Murrow (1963a) put it, 'what we seek is POLITICAL COMMUNICATION FOR ACTION EFFECT – that action

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being the support of governments'. Though a decade earlier the Jackson Committee had attempted to expunge the language of 'psychological warfare' from American foreign policy, the term proved more resilient. Embracing the term, but demurring its use, Murrow admitted that 'we are, it is true, in the business of propaganda, but a better term might be that of "political-psychological communications"'. Regardless of phraseology, Murrow made clear that the role of the USIA was to assist in the establishment of *government* in so-called counterinsurgency countries, that is, to take 'those actions … which modernizing leadership takes to establish confidence between itself and the people'.

Murrow illustrated the USIA's new approach by noting the broader diplomatic trend towards 'public diplomacy', targeting *populations*, not officials, with persuasive communication. Speaking to the Special Group's Interdepartmental Seminar, Murrow (1963a) offered the example of Iran, whose 'leaders and elite used to be our targets'. Now, he continued, 'our audience is the peasantry and the plain people'. In the Congo, Murrow stressed the significance of the USIA's weekly newsreels, produced in French, Lingala, and Swahili, that supported the regime of Prime Minister and CIA client Cyrille Adoula. 'The effort', Murrow insisted, 'has nothing to do with winning friends for the United States, or exploiting the American way of life'. Rather, it was 'an effort to support Adoula and his government'.

As Murrow explained, a key dimension of Kennedy's secret USIA directive was the relaxation of rules governing the attribution of USIA programmes. 'Where considered advisable', Murrow relayed, 'the United States Information Agency is authorized to communicate with other peoples without attribution to the United States Government on matters for which attribution could be assumed by the Government if necessary'. Under the new secret directive, the USIA would adopt a 'gray' psychological warfare strategy of 'attributability', a policy of qualified non-attribution, involving the circulation of unattributed materials that *could* be attributed to the United States if necessary, but which had a greater chance of succeeding if they remained unattributed (Murrow 1963b). The 'attributability' policy ensured that USIA materials were 'not unattributable', meaning if their true origin were discovered they would not need to be denied. In this way USIA materials remained 'overt' although in a highly qualified fashion. Through the policy of 'attributability', by 1963 a remarkable 65 to 70 per cent of total USIA output was non-attributed. Citing an example, Murrow (1963a) boasted to the Special Group on Counterinsurgency that in the Dominican Republic,

> we produced a complete program for citizen education in the election. We emphasized the citizen's rights and his obligations in a free society. This was all unattributed. All the mobile film units, all the print was done under the label of the provisional administration. This included cartoon books, television, radio – the whole gamut of political education.

Along with Vietnam, Laos, and Indonesia, Thailand was among the Asian 'counterinsurgency countries' where the USIA and Special Group were especially active.

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A proverbial 'domino country', USIA activities in Thailand 'filled a vacuum' created by the Thai government's lack of 'capability developing and conducting effective information programs without guidance and support' (Murrow 1963b). USIA operations in Thailand therefore served as a placeholder for the establishment of an 'autonomous' Thai effort and sought 'every opportunity to pass responsibility to the host government'. Like the OWI, which during the Second World War set up publishing and communication infrastructure in occupied territory before transferring them to allied political factions, USIA operations in Thailand sought to produce relationships of government that could be transferred to Thai government officials.

USIA policy in Thailand can therefore be understood as an attempt to foster communication *qua* government with and over the country's civilian population. Escalating its operations in 1963, the USIA increased unattributed radio broadcasts to Thailand's north-east and placed a remarkable 180 hours of weekly programming on various Thai radio stations. In publications for the north-east, the USIA concentrated on tabloid pictorials depicting 'the Thai Government's efforts to better the welfare of the people'. The USIA's production of films, posters, and school materials worked to 'enhance loyalty [to the Thai monarchy] rather than attack those who oppose it'. In this regard, the USIA emphasised 'productive' psychological warfare efforts, ones that would strengthen the relationship of power between government and governed.

As would also occur on a larger scale in Vietnam, USIA efforts reflected Foucault's (2007, 327) sense of 'communication as police' and its related strategy of *felicity* – of, as Foucault put it, 'linking together the state's strength and individual felicity … : making men's [sic] happiness the state's utility'.

As would also become the case in Vietnam, territoriality remained a significant obstacle to USIA operations, with much of Thailand's population located in rural and remote regions of the country. To implement its 'program of counter-subversion' at the village level, the USIA established in Thailand a cadre of Mobile Information Teams (MITs) in 1962. Stationed at branch posts around the country, in 1963 the programme was expanded and USIA Thailand was supplied with twenty-one mobile units to distribute literature and to screen its semi-weekly 'newsreel magazines' in remote areas. Developed jointly by the US and Thai governments, the purpose of the MITs was, as Murrow put it, to 'establish a bridge of understanding and a two-way flow of information between the Government and the people living in remote areas of the country' (Murrow 1963b). Though spun as 'bridges of understanding' to rural populations, USIA efforts were in fact an attempt to construct a relation of *government* and to paint a structure of hierarchy in the colours of dialogue and reciprocity. This was pursuant to the USIA's imperative to assay the population as part of its diagnostic task to gain a 'fuller understanding of village conditions and needs, village attitudes and opinions, and of the sources of village information'.

MITs consisted of a captain, a government overseer, a host government public relations representative, a USIA representative, a USIA driver, and a USIA projectionist. In addition to the dual tasks of irrigating rural areas with pro-government

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media and collecting statistical and survey data on the population, MITs also carried out more corporeal forms of biopolitical intervention. Teams often included a medical doctor from the Ministry of Health who was equipped with a stock of medicine suitable for treating people in remote areas. If the USIA was intent on presenting an image of modernisation as a cipher for regime loyalty, medical treatment doubled as a front in the psychological war against communism, carrying out the felicitous *police* function of 'supplying extra life' to rural populations (Foucault 2003a). As of 1963, MITs in Thailand had reached nearly 300 villages in the field, mostly located in the country's remote north and north-east regions.

Though failing health meant that Murrow's tenure as director of the USIA was brief, the so-called 'man who invented truth' (Cull 2003) is rarely if ever remembered as having presided over America's global psychological war against communism, much less the institution of a duplicitous international policy of 'attributability'. When queried about his feelings on having assumed his role as head of the USIA, Murrow (1963a) remarked that he was frequently asked by former colleagues 'how it feels now that I have, in essence, become a whore'. In response, Murrow answered that, 'in the course of the last two and a half years I have encountered no more stops or censorship than I would have had I still been working for CBS' – 'what I am trying to say in answer to your question is that I believe it is becoming increasingly a professional organization and has the mission of telling the truth so far as we can determine it'.

The American war pastoral

Scholars of war rightly emphasise the importance of populations as objects of political and military strategy. Detailing the importance of body counts for American perceptions of progress, Tyner (2009, 74) suggests that 'the Vietnam war became a war of population geography'. Gibson (1986), meanwhile, explains how the Vietnamese population became an object of coercion and how the bombing of civilian populations became a form of 'communication' to the North Vietnamese leadership in Hanoi. In terms of the United States' psychological war, the Vietnam War marked a pivotal turn towards the apprehension of the civilian population as a vital 'center of gravity'. In this section, I argue that US psychological warfare in Vietnam attempted to produce what Foucault calls 'pastoral power', that is, it attempted to produce a relationship of government that could simultaneously exert power over the entire country's population and over individuals as such. I suggest that these paradoxical scales of power, what Foucault calls the *omnes et singulatim* (all and each) of pastoral power, provide insight into the deep contradictions of US psychological warfare strategy in the field.

In addition to the scale of the population, the scale of the individual was vital to US psychological warfare strategy in Vietnam. 'The Communist "wars of liberation"', stressed Murrow (1963b), 'have made of the peasant, the worker, the

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youth, the student a political actor in a major drama. Just as the Communists focus on the *individual*, so must we.' The emphasis on the individual, and on the individual's participation in projects of government and modernisation, further reflected the liberal ideological underpinnings of American psychological warfare as a kind of governmental 'conduct of conduct' (Foucault 2007) – as an ability to exert influence over voluntary and individualised behaviour. Illustrating the pastoral theme, Murrow (1963b) reflected the belief that psychological warfare could be waged not against complex societies, cultures, and communities, but against a 'concert of individuals'. While the USIA stressed the population as the centre of gravity for revolutionary war, Murrow's framing of the population as a 'concert of individuals' revealed a hubris about the USIA's ability to isolate and influence the individual. 'If the *concert of individuals* in a land is not sold on its own leadership', Murrow insisted, 'that leadership will fail.'

Under the aegis of the USIA's new counterinsurgency mandate, psychological warfare in Vietnam was dramatically expanded during the period 1962–4. A key architect of this escalation was Douglas Pike, who worked in Vietnam as a foreign service officer before returning to the United States in 1963 to attend graduate school at MIT's CIA-funded Center for International Studies (CENIS). Upon arriving in Vietnam in 1961, Pike found the state of psychological warfare in extreme disarray. The Diem government was widely distrusted, and the National Liberation Front (NLF) – often derisively called the 'Viet Cong' by US forces – had been active for over a year (Long 1998). In a memorandum dated 24 November 1961, Pike aired grievances to a Special Projects Working Committee and outlined a corrective course of action for US psychological war strategy. Written just three months before Kennedy convened the Special Group on Counterinsurgency, Pike's memorandum argued that in addition to destroying the NLF's military capacity, the United States must also destroy its 'psychological will to resist'. He insisted, moreover, that it was the ordinary Vietnamese villager – the individual – who must be won over. In a remarkable passage, Pike (1961) outlined his philosophy of psychological warfare as

> the marriage of propaganda to social movements … so as to develop a reinforced appeal both to enlightened self-interest and to emotion. The purpose is to arouse and energize group members, to establish an *élan* … First, a claim to truth is established. This need not be a full-blown ideology, but it must involve converting ideas into actions, transforming abstract concepts into social levers; at any rate the claim to truth deals with such matters as the drive to economic modernization, the search for national status and power, etc. Secondly, emotions are tapped. The measure of success in establishing the claim to truth is the degree that passion is developed. Propaganda of a social movement must involve both the ideological approach, i.e. transformation of society through politics, and a mystical appeal, i.e. transformation of the individual.

In Pike's appraisal, harnessing Vietnamese social movements had been a particularly important lost opportunity, owing to what he identified as 'GVN [Government of Vietnam] mismanagement and innate Vietnamese cynicism'. As will be seen,

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failure to win the psychological war in Vietnam would often be attributed to a nebulous sense of the defectiveness of the Vietnamese people and their 'oriental traits' in responding to the various stimuli of American psychological warfare. In 1961, however, Pike remained optimistic that US psychological warriors could transmute the Vietnamese peasant into a modern individual on whom the levers of American psychological war would work.

Pike's words revealed, moreover, a stark pastoral logic: US psychological warfare must simultaneously mobilise the Vietnamese population (*omnes*) and enact a 'mystical' transformation of the individual as such (*singulatim*). Pike's emphasis on the individual as a lever for social change was perhaps influenced by his connection to CENIS, particularly the Second World War psychological warrior turned modernisation theorist Daniel Lerner (1958, 49). A classic of modernisation theory, Lerner's 1958 *The Passing of Traditional Society* was, as Simpson (1994) notes, forged in the context of the Cold War contest for the developing world. For Lerner too, the individual was the front line of the psychological war. 'It has been the work of the twentieth century', he wrote, 'to diffuse widely a mobile sensibility so adaptive to change that rearrangement of the self-system is its distinctive mode' (Lerner 1958, 49). In Foucauldian terms, Lerner saw the administration of governmental power in the developing world in terms of influencing 'practices of the self' (Foucault 2014a) in so-called modernising individuals. It was a position, widely held among psychological warriors in Vietnam, that 'traditional persons' were inherently malleable, and that 'modern individuals' could be created through exposure to the proper stimulus. As Farish (2010, 137) has argued, hinting at the pastoral paradox, psychological warriors were not only interested in 'molding humans en masse', they also 'sought to create new, modern persons in an alien space'. The individual, it was hoped, would be 'one of power's first effects' (Foucault 2003b, 30).

To effectively target Vietnam's concert of individuals, Pike (1961) insisted that psychological war projects should proceed from specific research. 'It cannot be stressed too strongly', he wrote, 'that the planning must follow, must stem from, the research; only with the facts in hand is it possible to work out realistic projects.' Though he argued for extensive research on both the GVN and the NLF, it was the common villager and the 'psychological facets of the Vietnamese climate of opinion' that Pike saw as decisive. Research, he argued, must 'isolate and delineate key sociological factors' of Vietnamese society to determine the 'relevant mores, customs, and stereotypes' that could establish a 'value profile or value constellation' of Vietnamese society upon which psychological warfare campaigns could be built. These 'isolations and delineations' can be understood not only as attempts to ground American psychological warfare within a body a social scientific expertise, but also as a strategy to produce what Foucault (2007, 184) calls 'absolutely specific modes of individualization' and the 'analytical identification' of individuals.

In his *History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978, 43) outlines how the analytical 'specification of individuals' transformed deviant sexualities such as 'the homosexual'

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into discrete species of humans. Indeed, in his 1977–8 lecture series Foucault (2007) went further to suggest that the 'specific modes of individualization' innovated by the early Christian church were central to the operation of pastoral power. For Foucault (2007, 183),

> analytical identification, subjection, and subjectivation are the characteristic procedures of individualization that will in fact be implemented by the Christian pastorate and its institutions. What the history of the pastorate involves, therefore, is the entire history of procedures of human individualization in the West.

In the effort to 'isolate and delineate' segments of the Vietnamese population, we can therefore discern a similar attempt at the 'specification of individuals', that is, an attempt to produce, survey, and exert power over the Vietnamese individual. In its efforts to produce discrete 'target audiences' in Vietnam, US psychological warriors can be understood as having produced forms of power/knowledge, notably the kinds of statistical analysis that serve as the basis of modern biopower (Foucault 2007, 101).

American efforts to classify life in Vietnam were fraught and often inconclusive. Moreover, they came remarkably late in the psychological war's course. In 1966, five years after Pike's initial report, a senior USIA foreign service officer reported that, in the arena of research, 'we fly by the seat of our pants'. Despite Pike's insistence on grounding psychological war efforts in research, there was a basic lack of the latter, and what studies did exist remained superficial, tending to 'emphasize deeds and [dissemination] statistics, and not attitude, opinion, and behavior' (cited in Katz *et al*. 1996, 129).

One of the first major efforts to conduct systematic research for the psychological war was the Advanced Research Projects Agency's (ARPA) Values Project, completed between 1968 and 1971. The Values Project consisted of a quartet of studies commissioned by ARPA to the Virginia-based Human Sciences Research Inc. (Bairdain *et al*. 1972; Havron *et al*. 1972; Parsons *et al*. 1972; Sternin *et al*. 1972). The second of these studies, *The Use of Cultural Data in Psychological Operations Programs in Vietnam*, was based on a full census of three villages. The study correlated demographic and biographical details with extensive interview questioning. Interview questions were based on the then-current 'values orientation theory' of the husband-and-wife team of Clyde and Florence Kluckhohn, the former a leading anthropologist for the OWI during the Second World War. The framework sought to determine the extent to which specific demographics – sex, age, education, occupation, and so forth – could be correlated to specific 'values' such as 'man's [sic] relation to nature', to time, to work, to others, and to his self. Though the framework attempted to parse 'modern vs. traditional' values, the study's results were wildly inconclusive. As shown in Figure 4.2, matrices were left blank in most instances, indicating the discovery of no meaningful correlation. Indeed, on the question of 'human nature', the results were so inconclusive they were left out of the report entirely.

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Table III-2. VARIATIONS IN VALUES BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Demographic Variables		Values Orientations: Man-Nature: Submission	Dominance	Harmony	Uncommitted	Variable	Time: Traditional	Situational	Goal-Oriented	Uncommitted	Variable	Activity: Achievement	Expressive	Inner-Development	Uncommitted	Variable	Relational: Formalistic	Peer-Oriented	Individualistic	Uncommitted	Variable
Sex	Male		++					‡	+		‡										
	Female						‡	‡													
Age	Youth	○	++				○	‡			‡										
	Young Adult		++				○	++				++									
	Adult	++	○				++					++									
	Mature Adult	‡	○	‡		‡	++					++	○				++				
Education	Low	‡		‡			++										++				
	Middle		++					++			+										
	High	○	++	○			○	++	+		+										
Occupation	Students		++																		
	Farmers																				
	Laborers																				
	Soldiers		++																		
	Teachers		++	○																	
	Civil Servants		++	○																	

KEY: Value Orientation:
++ Predominant
‡ Predominance equally shared
+ Strong but not predominant
○ Absent

No symbol in any of the five cells means equal emphasis on all five
Uncommitted--no commitment to any orientation
Variable--no consistent commitment

NOTE: Since no significant correlations were found between the Human Nature orientation and demographic variables, it was eliminated from this table.

30

Figure 4.2 Kluckhohn's 'value profiles' (Havron *et al.* 1972, 30)

Though attempts were made to map and refine the targets of psychological war, American operators nevertheless struggled to understand them. Territoriality represented a problem not only for the administration of psychological war, but also for understanding its targets. Forms of what Foucault (2007) calls 'counter conduct' confounded American efforts to assay the population, as research conducted in 'secured' territory was affected by the very dynamics of power that made it secure for US researchers. Whether through non-cooperation, misdirection, or simply telling interviewers what they wanted to hear, the specificity of the psychological war's targets remained elusive to American psychological warriors.

Psywar on the ground

While the staggering scale of US military violence in the Vietnam War is clear, the extent to which the United States succeeded in establishing power is less so. As Henry Kissinger (1969, 230) lamented, 'our military strength had no political corollary'. As Murrow (1963b) made clear, the USIA intended to replicate strategies of power based on Western media models. 'Our delivery system', he remarked, 'involves a massive apparatus that covers the functions overseas served here at home by broadcasting, publishing, newspaper, magazine, film, wire service, design, and education industries.' While the pastoral imperative to interrogate the population and individuals of Vietnam ran aground on the reticence

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and dissimulations of the Vietnamese people towards American surveying techniques, efforts to build and expand the territorial remit of the psychological war continued apace.

Early research showed that only a meagre mass communication infrastructure existed outside the Saigon area. In 1964 the USIA found that Saigon was home to all forty-five of Vietnam's daily newspapers, over one hundred of its 170 movie houses, and two-thirds of its 420,000 personal radio receivers. Additionally, the Saigon area accounted for roughly two-thirds of the country's total daily radio broadcast hours (USIA 1964a). Though reaching the Saigon area was important to psychological warriors, it did little to establish the governmental communication with villages and villagers that was increasingly understood as the key to the psychological war. To establish a territorial presence for its psychological war, the USIA began by employing twenty-seven American personnel who in turn directed 226 local employees. As part of its counterinsurgency turn, the USIA policy of non-attribution was in effect: almost all US psychological warfare materials were distributed through the GVN's official organ, the Vietnam Information Service (VIS), and bore no attribution to the United States. Operating three major branches in Hue, Dalat, and Can Tho, and twenty-one sub-posts throughout the provinces, the USIA's American and Vietnamese staff produced magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, films, and radio programmes through the VIS and under the guise of the GVN (Figure 4.3).

Through its field posts, the USIA was able to connect provincial and regional chains of command to a network producing and distributing two major magazines, three weekly newspapers, airdropped leaflets, pamphlets, posters, photo exhibits, a semi-monthly film magazine, bi-monthly film documentaries, and the necessary fuel and supplies to keep the programme going. By 1963, urban audiences for locally produced USIA films were estimated at 800,000 monthly. It was perhaps an indication of the importance placed on villages as targets of psychological war that rural audiences for film, without the subsidy of commercial circulation, were estimated at over one million per month. The USIA even produced twenty-one of its films with soundtracks in minority dialects. In radio, USIA Saigon produced fifteen hours of radio programmes every week, broadcast on eight stations, totalling over sixty hours of airtime weekly. Again in 1963, the USIA was in the process of producing a quarter of a million 'classroom copybooks' to distribute to rural schoolchildren. With attribution to neither the United States nor the GVN, the book was interspersed with text and picture stories of Vietnam, its geography, its history, and its 'war to remain free' (Murrow 1963a, 1963b).

The USIA considered its most effective publication for rural audiences to be a monthly magazine called *Rural Spirit* (*Huong Que*) (Figure 4.4). Begun in 1962, and indicative of the escalation of the American psychological war in Vietnam, *Rural Spirit*'s circulation quadrupled to 200,000 copies per month by 1963, plateauing at a rate of 565,000 copies per month in 1968 (Bairdain *et al.* 1972). Unattributed to

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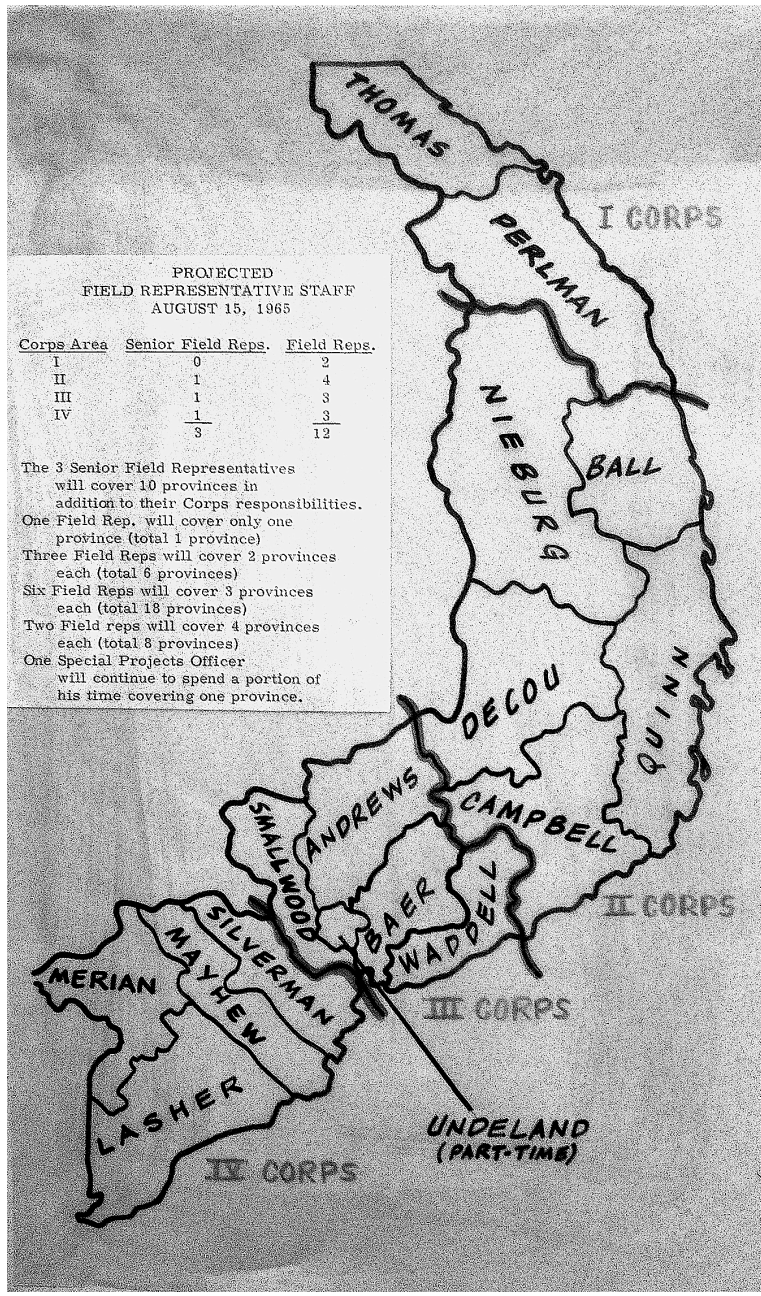

Figure 4.3 Map of JUSPAO field representatives' areas of responsibility (USIA 1965)

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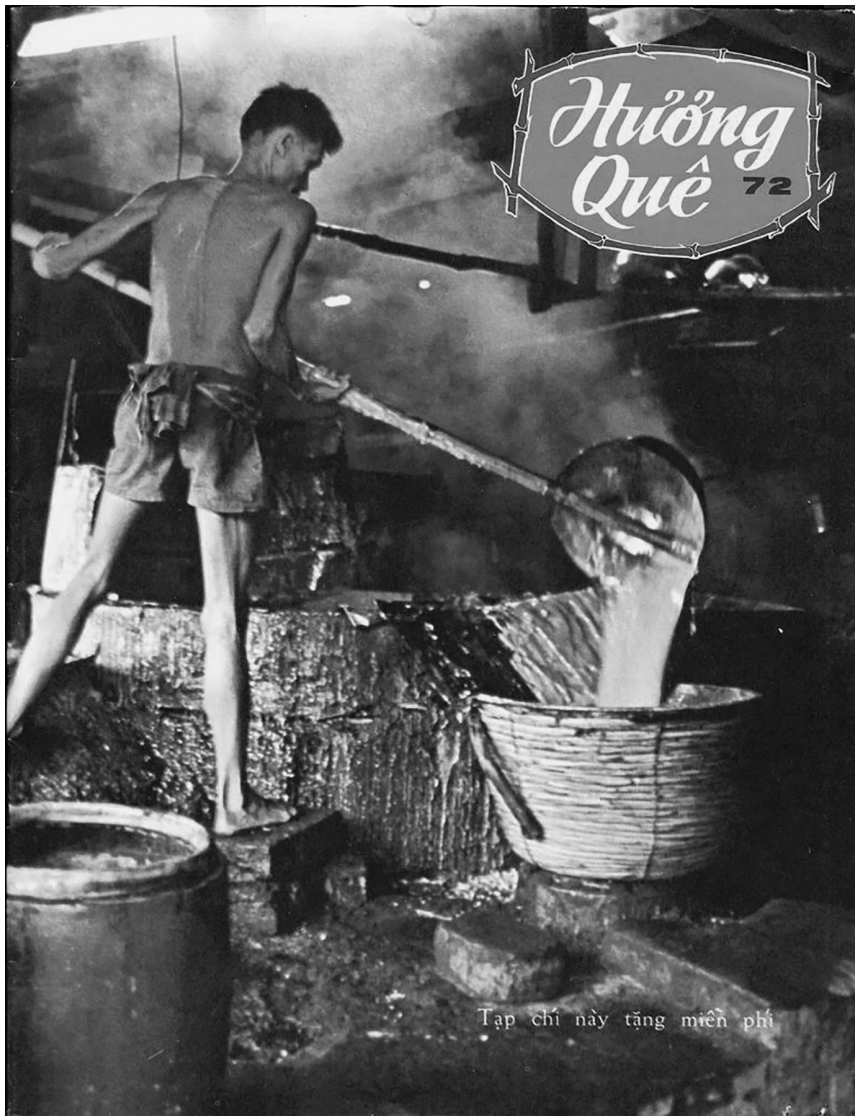

Figure 4.4 *Rural Spirit* magazine (Friedman 2006)

the United States and aimed at the population of strategic hamlets, the content was explicitly apolitical, designed to showcase the 'better lives' that could be found in US/GVN-controlled strategic hamlets (Belcher 2012). The magazine was popular among peasants in part for its sophisticated production values, but most of all for its instructional articles on agriculture and animal husbandry. Much of the technical information was laid out visually so that low-literacy readers could benefit

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from the instruction. Increasing the strength of Vietnamese agriculture, it was hoped, would increase the strength of the state.

The USIA also published a small weekly unattributed newspaper called *The Good Life*, designed to support specific clear-and-hold operations by the armed forces. Though circulated in support of the strategic hamlet programme, *The Good Life* was, like its cousin publication *Rural Spirit*, largely apolitical in content. It emphasised the kind of modern 'enlightened self- interest' that psychological warriors understood to be central to the production of governable subjects. *The Good Life* was frequently airdropped into otherwise inaccessible areas in an attempt to persuade readers to voluntarily relocate and was printed in three separate editions with a circulation of 30,000 each. The USIA's only major attributed output was the Vietnamese edition of the USIA's general *Free World* magazine, distributed for free with a circulation of roughly 160,000.

In this light, *Rural Spirit* and *The Good Life* can be understood as what Foucault (2007, 327) calls paradigmatic *police* strategies of felicity, of ensuring that Vietnamese life went 'beyond pure and simple subsistence'. As Foucault argues, central to the development of *police* power is the linking together of the power of the state with the productive power of the population, a process which coheres in the production of and appeal to the 'felicity' of individuals. As Foucault suggests, *police*

> must succeed in linking together the state's strength and individual felicity. This felicity, as the individual's better than just living, must in some way be drawn on and constituted into state utility.

In attempting to increase the productivity of agricultural labour, *Rural Spirit* sought to establish links of government grounded in the production of felicity. Like the efforts of the USIA in Thailand to bolster the Thai government's efforts to 'better the welfare of the people' through programmes of medical treatment, entertainment, and contingent economic development, the USIA in Vietnam attempted to produce ostensibly apolitical forms of development which it believed could serve a counterinsurgency function (Attewell 2015).

Accessing territory nevertheless remained a major problem for US psychological warriors, with airdrops often being the only way to deliver psywar products to hostile territories. As early as 1962, the USIA assembled MITs in an attempt to forge lines of communication into contested territories. Like the majority of psychological war programmes, MITs were officially unattributed, appearing as an independent effort of the GVN, though GVN representatives were generally accompanied by USIA drivers and projectionists. A typical MIT trip consisted of up to four hours of film shown to an evening audience in one village. Often more than 5,000 pieces of printed material would be distributed during a trip, including colour photos and various posters on religious and patriotic subjects.

Like the USIA Thailand MITs, efforts to reach rural populations in Vietnam were conceived as 'bridges of understanding' for a 'two-way flow of information'

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(Murrow 1963b). However, the suggestion of reciprocity was again belied by the hierarchical imperative to pursue the USIA's 'diagnostic task' of mapping and assaying rural populations to provide a fuller understanding of village conditions, attitudes, and opinions. Taken together, through its extensive network of field posts and sub-field posts, the USIA attempted to circulate newspapers, films, posters, pamphlets, and radio broadcast hours like blood through the Vietnamese body politic. It was a strategy of *police*, in the Foucauldian sense: to produce and manage communication as media both for the transmission of information, and for the ritualistic production of a modern, governable society.

The JUSPAO revolution

In 1964, the continued difficulty of asserting territorial control over the rural areas of Vietnam prompted President Lyndon Johnson to send new USIA director Carl Rowan to personally assess and report on the progress of the psychological war. As previous USIA field reports had emphasised, it was the rural population of Vietnam that was the country's 'most seriously neglected group' in the psychological war. As one USIA field report stressed, 'it is the rural population which holds the key to tactical success in the war' (USIA 1964b). Rowan's trip to Vietnam brought him to the same conclusion, and upon his return he reported to President Johnson that, despite near unanimous agreement on its importance, the psychological war was being given too little attention and direction. In return, Johnson mandated a massive expansion of the psychological war and tasked the USIA with the creation of 'an organization that reached right down to the village level' (USIA 1965b).

Despite the expansion of USIA field posts since 1961, most local psychological warfare efforts were designed and carried out on an ad hoc basis, either by the US Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) or by the local government's VIS. The proposed organisation – the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) – would 'establish an actual chain of command' that would make it a 'joint operation with US Military personnel'. Coinciding with the larger escalation of the United States' war in 1965, JUSPAO gathered under the umbrella of the USIA the psychological warfare activities of MACV, USAID, and VIS, coordinating the psychological war at national, provincial, and local scales. More field representatives meant greater need for equipment to customise materials in order to 'remain responsive to local needs'. Supporting a vast increase in both output and turnover, in 1965 Rowan asked Congress for an additional eight million dollars and fifty-six American personnel on top of existing budgets. In 1966, the agency spent over 145 million dollars and employed over 5,000 Americans in addition to its 5,000 local employees. In its own estimation, JUSPAO was 'the most revolutionary development in US overseas psychological action since the establishment of the USIA itself' (USIA 1969). Its revolutionary character lay not only in

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the unprecedented volume of psychological warfare materials it produced and circulated, but also in the scope of its responsibility for combining civilian and military operations both across agency lines (USIA, MACV, State Department, and USAID) and between the governments of the United States and South Vietnam. The USIA also highlighted the 'worldwide implications' of JUSPAO as a model and laboratory for exporting US psychological warfare to other countries 'threatened by insurgency or subversion'.

JUSPAO's psychological warfare strategy was governed by the conviction that a coherent messaging strategy could decisively turn the tide of popular opinion against the NLF insurgency and towards the United States and its GVN allies. Indeed, psychological warriors such as Douglas Pike explicitly modelled their efforts on the NLF model, whose victories and defeats they took to be direct results of their communication efforts.

For Pike, the NLF's popular support could be explained not as the result of politics or the anti-colonial struggle it represented, but as the result of a communication strategy independent of the war's material stakes. Pike (1966, 120) claimed that

> almost every act of the NLF was conceived as an act of communication … Its communication system not only communicated information, explained it in meaningful terms, and provided it with a value judgment based on *individual relevancy* – the more or less traditional communication function – but it also shaped a communication weapon and used it to strike at the vitals of the GVN. Its victories and defeats were essentially the results of successful or unsuccessful communication efforts. (Emphasis mine)

The belief that NLF victories could be reduced to successful 'communication efforts' belied the deeply held American conviction that communication represented a terrain of warfare that could be dis-embedded from the political structure of the conflict as a war of liberation against foreign and occupying forces. The elision of the political was further reflected in Pike's insistence upon 'individual relevancy' as the supposed lever of the NLF's popular support. While Vietnamese peoples may indeed have understood their individual advantages in the NLF's project of popular revolution, Pike's analysis reflected a studied reluctance to understand the NLF as a collective political project. On the contrary, Pike's construction and understanding of the NLF's strength projected a pastoral governmentality onto the Vietnamese people in which the individual – and the construction of its self-interestedness – remained the crucial pivot mediating a broader strategy of governing the population. While US psychological warriors may have understood the conflict as a 'political-psychological war', more often than not they failed to understand its political nature outside the liberal, individualising structures they sought to impose.

A similar confidence in the free-floating power of psychological warfare was held by JUSPAO's first director Barry Zorthian. Zorthian wore several hats within US civilian and military structures, serving also as the State Department's

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Minister-Counselor for Information at the American Embassy in Saigon. In this capacity, Zorthian oversaw the US Mission Press Center, which managed relations with foreign correspondents covering the war – the so-called five o'clock follies. Also in this capacity, Zorthian provided policy for MACV's Office of Information, attempting to be the valve through which all information in Vietnam ran (USIA 1969) (Figure 4.5).

Speaking to an early conference of JUSPAO field representatives, Zorthian (1965) boasted that JUSPAO could be 'more productive than the military'. 'We can', he claimed, 'remove personnel from the enemy ranks without killing them or taking friendly losses.' Not only did Zorthian indulge a therapeutic imaginary of psychological war as bloodlessness, he also shared the modernisationist conceit that 'traditional persons' were inherently malleable. 'We can reconstruct these people', he continued, 'and we can turn them into an asset for their countries' welfare.' The claim that Vietnamese civilians could be 'reconstructed' and 'turned into an asset for their country's welfare' echoed Douglas Pike's argument that psychological warfare necessitated a 'mystical transformation' of the individual as such. It combined the deeply pastoral strategy of producing the individual as an object of government with the *police* strategy of felicity – of 'integrating men's

C.

Media resources used and methods of operation

1. **Press Section**

The local output of the Press Section, which consists principally of daily press bulletins in French and Vietnamese, pictures, cuts, and reprints of magazine articles, is directed toward the local newspaper-reading population. Press output also goes daily to local radio stations. Considerable other reporting is done to IPS and IBS designed for the press in other countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, in order to compensate for lack of cross-reporting by the commercial news services. The themes stressed in USIS press output may be tabulated as follows:*

For local press	For US & foreign press
1. independence	1. INDEPENDENCE
2. government helps you	2. government helps you
3. cooperate with government	3. cooperate with government
4. Diem is strong leader	4. DIEM IS STRONG LEADER
5. Army is strong	5. ARMY IS STRONG
6. army helps you	6. army helps you
7. U. S. AID	7. U.S. AID
8. U.S. AID HELPS YOU	8. U.S. aid helps you
9. REASONS FOR U.S. AID	9. reasons for U. S. aid
10. FREE WORLD PROGRESS	10. Free world progress
11. FREE WORLD UNITY	11. Free world unity
12. SE ASIAN UNITY	12. SE ASIAN UNITY
13. ATOMS FOR PEACE	13. atoms for peace
14. RED COLONIALISM	14. RED COLONIALISM
15. LIFE IN VM ZONE IS HARD	15. LIFE IN VM ZONE IS HARD
16. VM TREATY VIOLATIONS	16. VM TREATY VIOLATIONS
17. COMMUNIST WAY IS NOT BEST	17. communist way is not best
18. COMMUNISM IS WORLD CONSPIRACY	18. communism is world conspiracy

* Themes shown in caps are those stressed

Figure 4.5 USIA country plan: Vietnam (USIA 1954b)

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activities into the state in a way that the state can draw strength from it' (Foucault 2007, 323). While in hindsight these boasts may appear as the power fantasies of Cold War social scientists, they suggest the extent to which the United States had committed to a political imaginary in which it could create 'new life', not only in the eponymous 'new life' hamlets, but also in the construction of the modern, governable individual.

With the establishment of JUSPAO, the construction of the individual as the goal and target of the psychological war became enshrined in countrywide inter-agency policy. As MACV's 1966 National Psychological Operations Plan defined it, the goal of the psychological war was to

> convince them [the people] that the fledgling Republic of Vietnam reflects the natural and naturally imperfect process of historical change and development toward a distinctly Vietnamese but modern revolutionary society, [and] offers to each Vietnamese [person] opportunity to advance within it … [T]his represents the only true and realistic hope for the advancement of national and personal aspirations. (US MACV 1966, 9)

The plan reflected American psychological warfare's commitment first to the broader strategy of global counterinsurgency which sought to support and extend the governmental power of friendly regimes, and second to circumscribing the political horizons of counterinsurgency countries to individualised forms of personal aspiration and opportunity within a broader context of apolitical nationalism. Again, however, American psychological warriors presumed the reality they attempted to create. Assuming the historical teleology of ascendant liberal capitalism that underwrote Cold War theories of modernisation, American psychological warriors ascribed to Vietnamese insurgents a *misrecognition* of the 'enlightened self-interest' which they sought to impose. Appearing reluctant to believe that opposition to the United States constituted a qualified political position, psychological warriors often understood such opposition in the *personal* and *psychological* terms which they believed to be the psychological war's centre of gravity. As Rohde (2011, 239) details,

> if communism was [as American strategists saw it] a psychological disease of a transitioning society, it must speak to some unfulfilled psychological need; it must serve some therapeutic purpose. According to [Lucian] Pye, peasants joined communist guerrilla movements in a desperate attempt to participate in a modern, stable society … . They accomplished a critical step in the transition from tradition to modernity through neither economic nor political development, but through psychology.

While American psychological warriors advanced the conceit that their opponents misrecognised their own self-interest, the desire to evacuate the Vietnamese insurgency of its inherently political character was, perhaps ironically, itself a

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misrecognition of the insurgency's goals and motivations.[3] The misrecognition allowed, however, for American psychological warriors to elide the political nature of the conflict and advance a strategy for winning the isolable and malleable hearts and minds upon which they presumed the war to hinge.

One of JUSPAO's first major campaigns after its establishment in 1965 was to exploit the coming Tet festival celebrations. An important Vietnamese holiday celebrating the Lunar New Year, Tet was traditionally a time of return to the family and was seen as an opportunity to induce defections from NLF ranks. The JUSPAO campaign emphasised an ominous theme contrasting the United States' military superiority with the NLF's relative material weakness and posed the 'Open Arms' (Chieu Hoi) defector programme as a personal recourse for individuals wishing to abstain or escape from the conflict (Whittaker 1997). Provincial newspapers reinforced the campaign by making 'clichés' – copy prepared by JUSPAO – available for insertion into newspapers across the country (Figure 4.6). JUSPAO itself published a fortnightly tabloid-style newspaper for NLF areas and produced a special issue for the Tet campaign containing an illustrated full-page story on a Chieu Hoi hamlet which was presented as a 'remarkable example of ingenuity, cooperation, and self-help among families' (USIA 1967). Nearly two million copies of the newspaper were dropped by air and hand-carried into semi-secure areas both by troops on search-and-clear operations and by armed propaganda teams.

'Self-help' was an enduring theme of the psychological war, part of the American mission to encourage governable 'enlightened self-interest' and to encourage the 'participation' which JUSPAO operators believed to be central to defeating the NLF and supporting the GVN (USIA 1969).[4] Pursuing these goals, JUSPAO's Tet campaign stressed themes of *felicity* and of happiness in private family life. Figure 4.7 shows one JUSPAO poster in support of its Tet campaign which advertised the 'happiness' to be found through participation in the life of strategic hamlets, and in rejection of the NLF. The poster foregrounded two Vietnamese women and presented a pastoral theme with children, emphasising personal and apolitical forms of happiness in family life. As JUSPAO attempted to create liberal forms of governable individuality, it recalled Pred's (1981, 15) identification of the liberal-capitalist assumption that, divorced from collective political projects and ownership of productive property, 'the individual [can] find meaning and satisfaction in his life at home and nowhere else'.

[3] As McCoy (2012, 366) notes in the context of counterinsurgency in the Philippines, American leaders often failed to understand, or perhaps accept, the political basis of resistance to American rule, instead identifying opposition with 'race envy, hatred, and blood lust'. As a 'recurring problem within the US [military] information system', McCoy suggests that 'the lack of an appropriate [political] paradigm neutralized prodigious data gathering'.

[4] JUSPAO's stated goals were to 'increase the Vietnamese people's participation with their government in the war against communist subversion and aggression' and to 'increase the Vietnamese people's participation with their government in Vietnam's priority program for Revolutionary Development of social and economic progress' (USIA 1969).

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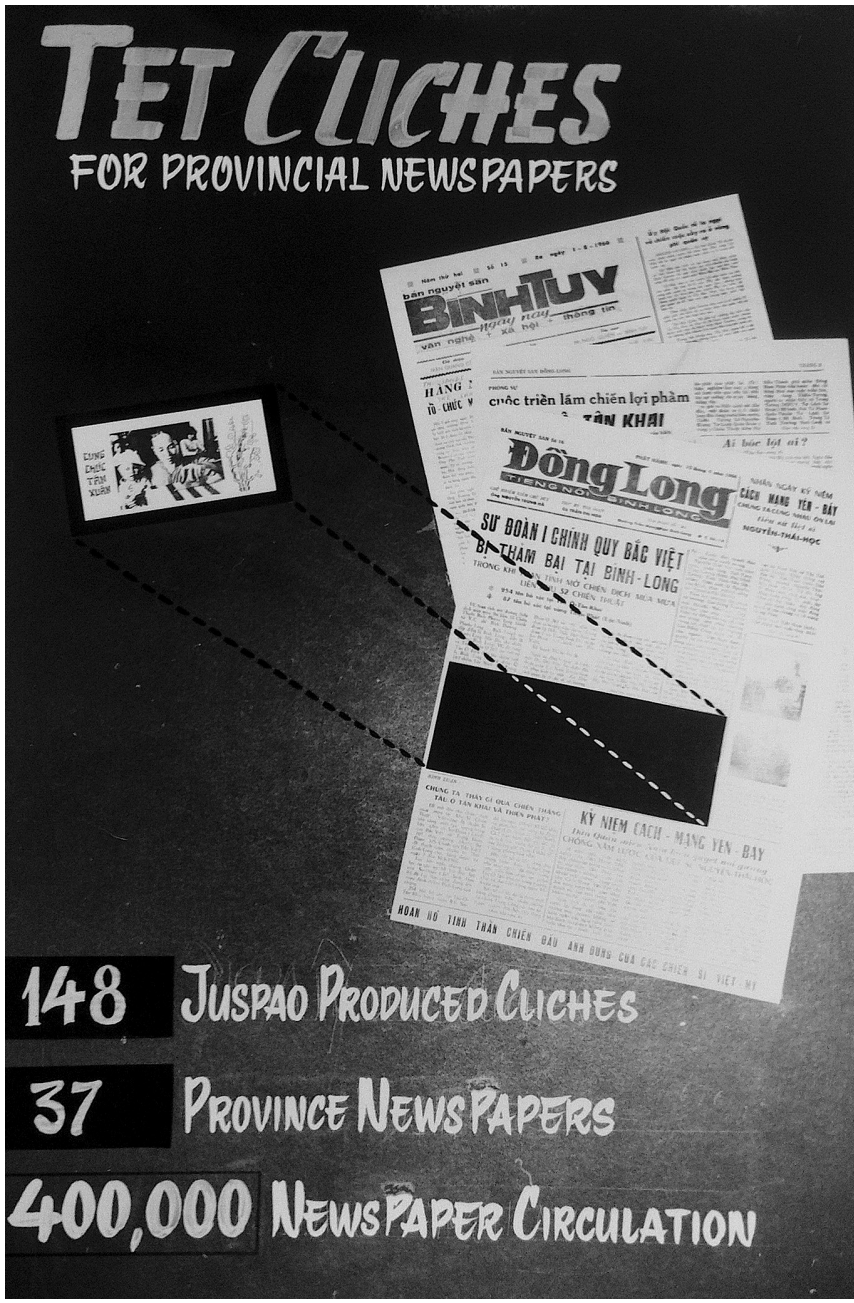

Figure 4.6 Tet cliches: JUSPAO supplies content for provincial newspapers (USIA 1967)

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Figure 4.7 Tet leaflet (USIA 1967)

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Mediating violence

It must be stressed, however, that the strategy of felicity was often pursued not despite, but paradoxically through, the administration of military force. Though the coercive power of American military violence was a regular theme of the psychological war, JUSPAO attempted to square the circle of its punitive violence by rhetorically positioning the United States as ally and aide to its victims, ultimately placing the blame for all violence on the NLF. Though the NLF certainly administered its own forms of political violence, the United States attempted to portray itself as both the destroyer of, and the saviour to, the Vietnamese people. 'We step up our efforts', read one early JUSPAO (1965a) guidance,

> to increase the villagers' disillusionment with imposters who, while flying the flag of freedom and progress, terrorize the people to whom they promise paradise; who abduct and conscript the villagers' sons to serve as cannon fodder; who do not take proper care of them because they lack the requisite medical facilities; who expose innocent people to great danger by hiding among them and using them as shields. Whenever it can be done convincingly, we contrast the burdens which the Viet Cong impose upon the people with Vietnamese and American efforts to aid them now – not in the distant future to which mendacious communist promises point.

In advertising its ability 'to aid them now', JUSPAO sought to diminish the horizons of Vietnamese self-determination to capitulation and dependency upon the United States for relief and medical treatment. It was a pernicious logic in which the United States sought to leverage its ability to alleviate and cease the suffering it caused the Vietnamese people when the NLF 'used them as shields'. It was furthermore an effort to collapse the temporal frame of the strategy of felicity to the immediacy of the crises that American bombing campaigns produced and exacerbated. Against a 'distant future of communist promises' – of collective political Vietnamese self-determination – American psychological warfare posed *individualised* opportunities for relief via surrender or defection. It was an attempt to produce Douglas Pike's vision of an individually circumscribed political agency – to produce the 'enlightened' and 'self-interested' individuals psychological warriors sought to govern. Through the Chieu Hoi programme especially, JUSPAO (1965a) emphasised 'that there is an escape hatch for the Viet Cong rank and file'.

The pursuit of the strategy of felicity further illustrated the paradoxical moral economy of psychological warfare and its claim to 'save lives'. If the United States made medical treatment part of its psychological warfare through, for example, the employment of medics in its Mobile Information Teams, this therapeutic function was the Janus face of its coercive strategy in which bombing was understood as a form of communication (Gibson 1986). In addition to the ways that, as Gregory (2017b) identifies, bombing itself was framed through a moral economy

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which purported to save lives by shortening war, American psychological warfare in Vietnam attempted to make bombing socially and politically legible to its victims and witnesses. In an effort to ensure that bombing did not remain what one Second World War veteran called an 'unexplained ultimatum' (Sleeper 1952), JUSPAO emphasised the inevitability of the NLF's defeat as the premise for the conclusion that prolonged resistance by the NLF only exacerbated the suffering which the United States would cause. In this political imagination, the ultimate causality of American bombing deaths lay with the NLF and those who sheltered them. As a medium for communicating the coercive strategy of bombing, the moral economies of bombing and psychological warfare overlapped as the latter scripted the former by inverting the causality of bombing casualties, describing the NLF's responsibility for them as 'ruthless', 'vain', and 'inexcusable' (JUSPAO 1965a).

It was JUSPAO's hope that by laying the blame for the brutality of the American bombing campaign at the feet of the NLF it could construct a picture of the NLF as callous invaders indifferent to the suffering of the South Vietnamese population. While it may seem an incredible conceit that described more in fact the United States' own role in the war, it constituted one of the war's many aporias: JUSPAO (1965b) attempted to 'link [the war's] brutality to the system the VC [sic] seeks to impose upon the Vietnamese people, i.e. the communist system'. This attempt to frame the war's brutality in terms of the 'communist system', moreover, sat paradoxically alongside JUSPAO's own efforts to emphasise the 'inexhaustibility' of US capitalism's military industrial complex. Indeed, early JUSPAO guidance on the exploitation of 'VC vulnerabilities' advised emphasis on

> the military capacities which the United States can and will bring to bear; the fact that these capabilities are virtually inexhaustible; and the certainty that the Viet Cong can never hope to match them – neither in quantity nor in quality. US air power and the unlimited industrial capabilities of the United States on which it is based, merit particular stress. (JUSPAO 1965a)

While JUSPAO's first director boasted that psychological warriors could 'remove personnel from the enemy ranks without killing them' (Zorthian 1965), this therapeutic discourse obscured the fact that 'defection appeals' appeared most commonly in the form of leaflets preceding and following bombing raids. A psychological war circuit therefore ran a course through American bombing campaigns in an effort to 'explain' bombing and thereby induce desired behaviours, namely defection and surrender. In a 1 June 1965 field report to JUSPAO's central office in Saigon, JUSPAO field representative Philip Mayhew (1965) outlined the process, noting that Vinh Binh province had been selected for bombing and artillery interdiction programmes. Like in the Second World War, US psychological warriors prepared 'explanatory and warning leaflets' for the civilian population in advance of bombing raids in an attempt to exculpate the United States from moral responsibility and to externalise it onto both the NLF and the civilians who supported them.

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One 'warning leaflet' to North Vietnamese civilians depicted a bombed oil storage area with the accompanying text *'STAY AWAY FROM TARGETS LIKE THIS'*. The leaflet's back text read:

> To the civilian population of North Vietnam: WARNING. The bombing is not directed toward you. Don't risk your life. Stay away from all military targets such as: Oil Tanks and other petroleum storage areas. Bridges, highways, railroads, and waterways used to carry military supplies and troops. (Friedman n.d.c)

While it is unclear what recourse civilian populations would have even with foreknowledge of bombing raids, as retired US Sergeant Major Herb Friedman claims, 'these warnings were calculated to gain the good will of the people to the extent this was possible under the circumstances, to serve a humanitarian purpose' (Friedman, n.d.c.). Following bombing raids, as JUSPAO field representative Mayhew continued, leaflets were airdropped instructing survivors to defect or surrender to GVN or American forces, thus completing the warning–bombing–surrender circuit in which bombing raids reproduced the extortionate logic of colonial air policing (Neocleous 2013) and attempted to 'conduct the conduct' of Vietnamese civilians and combatants alike. It was therefore a strange form of humanitarian discourse, rooted in an ostensible effort to induce surrenders and defections, that gathered around the United States' advertisement of the fearsomeness of its bombing campaigns. As Friedman (n.d.c) darkly joked, 'talk about sending a mixed message'.

If the 'humanitarian' appeal of American bombing was not entirely artifice, its content emphasised relief and aid on strictly *personal* terms – the proverbial 'escape hatch' from the violence that the United States promised to inflict. The moral economy of psychological warfare's claim to life-saving humanitarianism here overlapped with another of its key tenets, namely the claim to 'impose order on the lawless' (Gregory 2017b). Again illustrating the special relationship between bombing and psychological warfare, JUSPAO used the broader American bombing campaign in an attempt to construct the kind of isolated, rational, and self-interested individuals it believed it could produce and govern.

While JUSPAO had no control over decisions concerning if, when, and where to bomb, it attempted to exploit the American bombing campaign both to constrict and to mobilise the political agency of Vietnamese individuals. To constrict political agency, JUSPAO (1965a) saw its advantage in the scale and severity of bombing to 'play as heavily as possible upon the natural human fears and emotions'. JUSPAO advanced a torturous logic of applying unbearable pain to the Vietnamese body politic to produce in individuals 'the kind of weariness against which even courage and faith are often helpless'. Furthermore, JUSPAO made sure to communicate the scale of the bombing in the North to NLF fighters embedded in the South. 'We inform the Viet Cong', one JUSPAO directive read, 'about every detail of the bombing of North Vietnam and, especially, about its

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reason: the destruction of the North Vietnamese capability to support the Viet Cong.' It was again an attempt to place causal finality for bombing with the NLF and to communicate to NLF fighters the destruction of their homes and families. JUSPAO even sought to exploit the spirituality of the Vietnamese people. 'We do not hesitate', a directive on 'VC psychological vulnerabilities' read,

> to appeal to beliefs in the supernatural which are widely held and that, within this framework, we emphasize the indignity and ignominy which awaits the man whose dead body is left on the battlefield; buried in an unmarked grave without the requisite ritual, his errant soul may never find peace.

Ultimately, the constriction of Vietnamese political agency within the political environment of American bombing culminated in a concomitant mobilisation of this agency for the 'choice' between life and death. The injunction to 'choose life or death' was indeed a motif of the larger US strategy in Vietnam which attempted to produce and contrast its constructed death worlds (Mbembé & Meintjes 2003) with its sanctioned project to build 'new life' in the country. Psychological warriors therefore emphasised the *choice*, on personal terms, between life and death. As one 1964 leaflet depicting an Iroquois 'Huey' helicopter firing a rocket put it,

> if you attack the Army of the Republic of Vietnam or if you attack the New Life Hamlets, you will die horrible deaths as the result of the fire of the weapons that are carried by this helicopter. It will appear whenever and wherever you launch an attack. In order to avoid a pointless, needless death, you should leave the rank of the Viet Cong and bring your weapons with you to return to the arms of the Republic of Vietnam. The government will give you a reward and will ensure your safety and the safety of your families. The people, your relatives, your families, and your wives and children are waiting for you. (Friedman n.d.d)

To 'choose life' within the confines of the political agency which American psychological warriors sought to construct for the Vietnamese individual was to choose defection or surrender as the only alternatives to the death worlds of American bombing. As JUSPAO field representative Mayhew approvingly assumed, the preponderance of bombing in his field area of Vinh Binh province accounted for the province having among the highest number of surrenders/defections in the country.

Though US psychological warriors sought to isolate, demoralise, and constrict the political agency of the NLF and its civilian supporters, credibility remained a perhaps unsurprising obstacle. The question of *when*, for example, JUSPAO could 'convincingly' contrast the burdens imposed by the NLF with American efforts to 'aid them now' was often a difficult one. Even before JUSPAO's establishment, a 1964 USIA report revealed that the credibility of atrocity propaganda depicting the NLF 'terrorizing the people' was limited due to the fact that 'the experience of most rural people is that the VC concentrate their fire on GVN troops and officials, rarely committing overt acts against uninvolved citizens' (USIA 1964b).

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The report noted that many Vietnamese villagers in fact felt that the NLF had done more to help them than the GVN, and that 'the people will not be tricked by crude, spiteful broadsides from a government which itself is hardly lily-white'. Though JUSPAO was meant to consolidate and professionalise the various psychological war efforts in Vietnam prior to 1965, it is ironic that, subsequent to its establishment, JUSPAO directives suggest that the United States' belief in its own psychological war messaging eclipsed this prior knowledge that depicting the NLF as 'fiends' would appear incredible to the people of Vietnam. It was perhaps indicative of the hubris of US psychological warriors who believed, like JUSPAO director Barry Zorthian, that they were capable of 'reconstructing' the Vietnamese people as modern, governable individuals.

In addition to the problem of credibility, exploiting atrocity propaganda against the NLF had the further consequence of advancing the latter's so-called terror objectives. While JUSPAO was eager to reveal, dramatise, and exploit NLF violence, there was a political geography to its mediation of violence. To a global audience, JUSPAO sought to portray the 'Viet Cong' as ruthless and maniacal; however, it was also important for JUSPAO to manage global representations of the conflict and its violence and to minimise depictions of the NLF's political and military strength. As an early JUSPAO (1965b) paper on the 'exploitation of communist atrocities' noted,

> we must try to assure that our output on atrocities to foreign audiences does not unnecessarily convey exaggerated impressions of Viet Cong power and GVN inability to provide security for its people. For example, the photo of an injured mother and child depicts VC brutality without implying VC power. But a photo of a district chief's head ceremoniously impaled on a pike and flanked by the hanging bodies of his deputies in a town square tells quite another story – it tells of VC power deliberately applied to 'fair game targets' and impudently exercised in the face of GVN authority.

The guidance advised therefore that JUSPAO only publicise violence perpetrated against victims 'who could not have under any circumstances avoided their fate' through attempts to appease the NLF. Furthermore, JUSPAO advised that atrocity propaganda only be used when victims could be identified as 'unmistakably common folk', and never when targets could be identified as 'GVN officials, Americans, landlords, etc'. The purpose of the American psychological warrior was therefore to provide social context for the mediation of political violence to ensure that 'enemy atrocities generate more hostility than fear'.

American psychological warfare therefore remained an incongruous amalgam of strategies attempting to paint over the contradictions of the American presence in Vietnam. While it internally acknowledged the NLF's relative judiciousness in selecting legitimate targets, JUSPAO nonetheless attempted to tie political violence in Vietnam to the 'communist system' while simultaneously emphasising the United States' own capacity and willingness to leverage its industrial power to wage a brutal and punitive war.

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The television war

Though Vietnam is often remembered as the first 'television war' to be broadcast nightly into American homes (Hallin 1989; Hoskins 2004), it was also the first war in which the medium would become a major part of the psychological offensive. A lesser-known aspect of the war's history, JUSPAO's television project was the culmination of the pastoral, police, and territorial strategies of the psychological war. Built upon the strategy of felicity, it had the potential to 'reach down to the village level' while simultaneously constructing the potential for a truly national audience. Between 1952 and 1964, the United States financed the purchase of low- and medium-power radio transmitters to assist the GVN in setting up and bolstering the signals of radio stations in an attempt to construct a national listening audience. With the establishment of JUSPAO in 1965, however, work began on the construction of a national television network, which would become one of its marquee projects.

As JUSPAO's second director Edward Nickel (n.d.) recounted late in the war, the construction of radio and television networks stemmed from 'an increased understanding of the importance of developing better lines of communication with the people, especially those in rural areas'. As Nickel made clear, the goal of the networks was to establish communication as a form of *police* – as he put it, to 'make an important contribution to successful communication between the Government and the governed'. Television network construction and expansion, however, involved a lesser-known chapter in the history of American air power: namely, the use of US Navy aircraft equipped to broadcast television signals from the air. The Navy's Oceanographic Development Squadron Eight (VXN-8) Detachment WESTPAC – nicknamed the 'Blue Eagles' – began one-hour daily television broadcasts over the Saigon area in February 1966, which continued until temporary ground facilities were operational in October of the same year (JUSPAO 1971b). With the completion of ground facilities in Saigon, Blue Eagle aircraft were moved south to the Mekong Delta area in October 1966 to provide broadcast coverage until ground facilities in Can Tho were completed in November 1968. In the interim, temporary ground facilities were constructed in the north at Hue in September 1967, and the acquisition of additional Blue Eagle aircraft allowed for aerial coverage of Qui Nhon in January 1968.

In addition to the classical aerial strategies of surveillance and bombardment, air power in Vietnam was also used as a strategy of police and a tool of psychological warfare. Air power provided a kind of 'flexible response' for psychological war in Vietnam, with Blue Eagles able to provide soft coverage until permanent facilities were built in a given area. When ground facilities were complete, Blue Eagles would move to the next interim site and thereby cascade broadcasts over the territory of Southern Vietnam. Figure 4.8 shows the state of broadcast facilities

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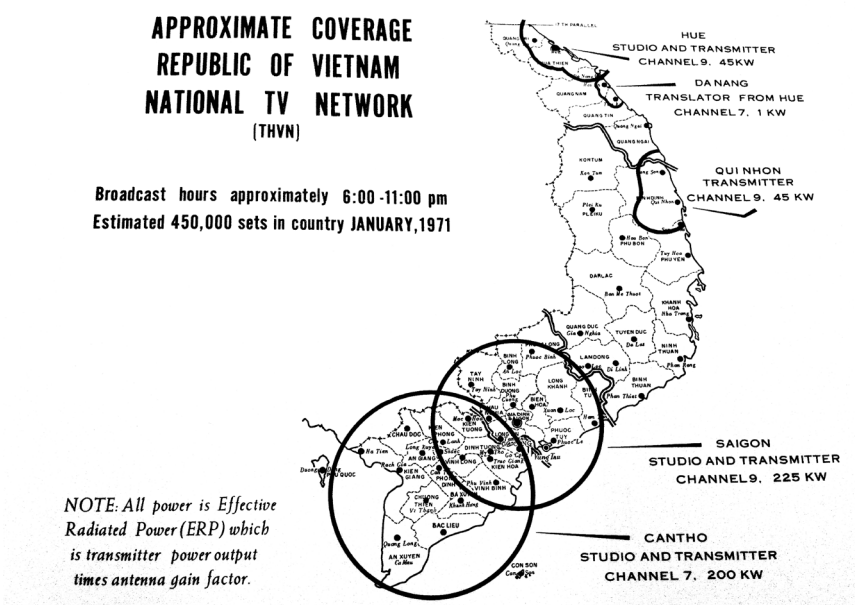

Figure 4.8 Vietnam's first television network (US MAC-IO 1970)

in 1969, with the Blue Eagles covering the Qui Nhon area in the north-east. There were, however, complications in the construction of the network. During the Tet Offensive of 1968, the temporary ground station in Hue was destroyed, which diverted the Blue Eagles from Qui Nhon, leaving the latter region without broadcast capability until May 1968, when the ground facilities at Hue were repaired and the Blue Eagles were returned to Qui Nhon. Ground broadcasts from Saigon continued from temporary facilities until large permanent facilities that would serve as the network's administrative core were completed in March 1968. The completed Saigon complex served as the headquarters for the network's news, programming, production, entertainment, supply, engineering, and logistical support to the other stations.

According to a 1971 project report, the television viewing audience in Vietnam was estimated at about 5.5 million viewers watching about 450,000 sets, with a potential audience within the effective network signal area of approximately 14 million. With roughly ten million US dollars invested, a JUSPAO (1971b) project completion report boasted that 'the GVN now finds it possible to communicate visually with an audience which they had virtually no chance of reaching a bare five years ago'.

The United States' key corporate partner in the television project was NBC International (1967, 35), which provided expertise, logistics, and training on the

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project. In a 1967 report, NBC International summarised the project's goals and rationale:

> A principal reason for USG [United States Government] wanting to help GVN develop a Television capability is to try to create among the Vietnamese a sense of nationalism. They must identify themselves as part of a nation that has a history, as well as a future. They must understand what the war is all about, and what their part as an individual is in helping their government be victorious. They should also identify themselves as part of the growing group of free nations of Asia.

Though it was questionable how many Vietnamese citizens would be able to watch the new service and how often, it was hoped that an imagined national (and nationalistic) community might follow the construction of a national audience (Anderson 1983). For this reason, the project was preoccupied with achieving national coverage and constructing a governmental technology that could potentially reach the entire population. The project was an example of what Rohde (2011, 239) argues was American psychological warfare's attempt to 'design a psychologically appropriate political infrastructure for the emerging nation – a structure through which peasants would develop the appropriate psychological ties to the state'. It was also an attempt to combine government at the scale of population with the government of the isolated individual viewer, the quintessential structure of pastoral power – *omnes et singulatim*.

It was, furthermore, a strategy of *felicity* – an attempt to exchange participation in communal political projects for the satisfactions of entertainment in private life. Though there is scarce archival information on the television project, a programming schedule has survived from which information can be gleaned. As shown in Figure 4.9, television programming reproduced the standard Western format, with pro-government news, announcements, and commentary replacing commercial advertisements. Programmes concerning the national police, criminal re-education, the army, mobilisation, and Chieu Hoi interleaved with sports, opera, music, and variety programming. Additionally, a third category of programme concerned the quotidian police practices of 'making live' (Foucault 2008) beyond subsistence, namely agriculture, fishing, and public health.

In addition to the dissemination of pro-government messaging and the modern sensibility of televisual entertainment, the TV project can be understood as a strategy of *policing* the time of Vietnamese individuals. As one JUSPAO study of the project revealed, central to the concerns of American psychological warriors was the 'use of time in the evening' (USIA 1968) and the way that television viewing affected Vietnamese individuals' 'constructive and destructive uses of time'.

In terms of governmentality, the television timetable can be understood in connection to Foucault's (1977b, 157, 60) analysis of the prison timetable as a kind of 'machinery for adding up and capitalizing time', a 'seriation of successive activities [that] makes possible a whole investment of duration by power'. Outside the

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Figure 4.9 Vietnamese television schedule *c.* 1969 (JUSPAO 1971b)

strictures of penal confinement, however, the television timetable as a technology of *police* can be understood as a quintessentially liberal apparatus of power relying on the voluntary participation of viewers. The counterinsurgent question of 'constructive and destructive uses of time' can further be understood in connection to what E. P. Thompson identifies as the discovery by the leisure classes of the 'problem' of working-class leisure time. As Thompson (1967, 95) wrote in his essay *Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism*,

> if we are to have enlarged leisure … the problem is not 'how are men going to be able to consume all these additional time-units of leisure?' but 'what will be the capacity for experience of the men who have this undirected time to live?' If we maintain a Puritan time-valuation, a commodity-valuation, then it is a question of how this time is put to use, or how it is exploited by the leisure industries.

Though television in Vietnam was far from operating on a self-sustaining model of commodifying time through the sale of advertisements, JUSPAO's effort to set up an apparatus for producing a commodity-valuation of time can be understood as an attempt to *police* – as the creation of path-dependent conditions for the transfer of power from the state to capital (Neocleous 2000, 41).

The effort to 'capitalise time' as a strategy of counterinsurgency can moreover be understood as an intervention in what Federici (2004, 7) identifies as the

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'sphere of reproduction as a source of value-creation and exploitation'. As Cindi Katz (2001, 714) notes, 'primarily cultural arenas of social reproduction include that broad category of cultural production categorized as the media'. Though often neglected in this connection, television infrastructure can be productively theorised as *means of social reproduction*. In this light, JUSPAO's television project can be seen as an effort to intervene in processes of social reproduction and to construct a television network as a strategy to create and enclose a new *means of social reproduction* for the Vietnamese population. If, as Thompson (1967, 78) suggests, 'enclosure and agricultural improvement were both, in some sense, concerned with the efficient husbandry of the time of the labour-force', the television project was an attempt to enclose and capitalise Vietnamese leisure time, to 'invest duration with power', and to parse and securitise 'constructive' from 'destructive' uses of time.

Though it occurred in a variety of venues – schools, village viewing kiosks run from petrol generators, or, for some, in individual homes – television as psychological warfare was an attempt to structure spaces of leisure time, scaling these miniatures of consumption to the broader nation. It was an attempt to structure the intimate spaces of domestic life and to offer an apolitical vision of private and personal felicity (Cowen 2004). It attempted what Neocleous (2000, 55) identifies as the *police* function of addressing the 'problem of idleness outside the factory' and administering the 'morality, profligacy and propriety of the working class'. It was the quintessential *police* interest 'in what men do' (Foucault 2007, 322) and perhaps also what they *do not* do. As Garmany (2009, 733) notes, 'television keeps bodies in private spaces, anchoring them to sofas, chairs, and hammocks. Instead of occupying public space, bodies are pinned down, kept off the streets, and exploited themselves as spaces of compliance and docility.'

Seen in this way, JUSPAO's television project was what Herbert (1996a, 579) identifies as an attempt to exercise authority over space, to 'control and administer subject populations', and to 'secure compliance to the state's legal and moral order'. As territoriality remained a problem for American psychological warriors, television offered the promise of overcoming the friction of distance. It offered the possibility of asserting a strategy of governance in spaces where the state has limited material presence – what Garmany (2009, 722) calls a kind of 'governance without government'.

Evaluating psychological war

As revealed by a 1968 JUSPAO-commissioned Simulmatics Corporation proposal for a study on sixty so-called TV Hamlets, there was an effort to 'ascertain the effects of the recent introduction of TV into Vietnam in reducing political

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dissidence and turbulence' (USIA 1968).[5] In other words, there was an effort to determine the extent to which television could be used as a tool for counter-insurgency. Enthusiasm for the project was palpable, with defence officials noting that the study provided the opportunity to

> monitor the behavioural impact of a new communications medium on a relatively untouched audience. Television is just now coming into Vietnam and it affords the opportunity for social research in a controlled situation, the results of which may be of use to our psychological operators in Vietnam as well as those who may be called upon to implement similar innovations in other developing countries.

Again, the war in Vietnam was understood as a laboratory for military social science with an eye to future military actions in the region and elsewhere. 'Even beyond Vietnam', the report read, 'the study could possibly arrive at valuable conclusions concerning the speed and degree of change brought to the village in an underdeveloped country through the advent of television.' TV research was to focus on the felicitous – on 'satisfaction with life in the village' – as well as governmental questions of 'constructive and destructive uses of time; information level about national, local and world affairs; and attitudes towards national goals and policies'. It is uncertain from the archival record whether the aforementioned studies on the effect of television took place; however, the research proposals themselves suggest how the United States envisioned television as a psychological war project.

Evaluating the successes and failures of psychological war campaigns, however, was a persistent and seemingly intractable problem. As noted by the editors of a massive two-volume study of psychological warfare contracted to the American Institutes for Research in 1972 by the US Department of the Army, 'dissatisfaction with the analysis of PSYOP [psychological operations] is widespread' (McLaurin *et al*. 1976, 777). There was general agreement that the causality of defection and surrender, for example, was overdetermined, and that isolating discrete variables was nearly impossible (McLaurin *et al*. 1976, 777). One crucial source of data on the effectiveness of psychological warfare came from prisoners of war (POWs) and defectors in the Chieu Hoi programme, who were regularly subjected to interviews and interrogation for the collection of both tactical and

[5] Itheil De Sola Poole, the TV study's programme coordinator and research director, was a leading figure in post-Second World War administrative communications research. Poole was another alumnus of MIT's Center for International Studies. His company – the Simulmatics Corporation – was an early contractor with ARPA, DARPA's predecessor, which was particularly interested in the uses of communication for counterinsurgency warfare. Noting a paucity of research on the effects of television on villages, the initial research design programme cites Wilbur Schramm's UNESCO-sponsored work on village radio as a model for the programme. Schramm, like De Sola Poole, was a leading scholar of Administrative Communication Studies in the post-war period whose research was largely bankrolled by the US Department of Defense. Schramm had also written the first of the Johns Hopkins ORO studies on psychological warfare in 1953.

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psychological intelligence. Though little critical work has examined the role of prisoner-of-war interrogation in shaping American approaches to psychological warfare, archival sources suggest that interrogation represented a further circuit of psychological warfare in which interrogation data was reincorporated into psychological war strategy.

In an early memorandum for MACV HQ on the interrogation of POWs, JUSPAO (1965c) officials wrote that psychological field operations had been greatly enhanced through the use of NLF prisoner reports supplied by the Collections Division of MACV Intelligence (J-2). Though interrogation data became central to psywar design, much of the information that JUSPAO received was, by the time they received it, out of date, and interrogation reports '[could not] keep abreast of the rapidly changing attitudinal patterns regarding key issues like recruitment, surrender, victory, defeat, etc'. Furthermore, Army Intelligence interrogations rarely produced data on 'VC [Viet Cong] psychological vulnerabilities', and as such JUSPAO began to issue its own guidance on prisoner interrogation in an attempt to refine its strategies of coercion and persuasion.

The objective of the interrogator's guide was to help 'elicit information that may be of use by both US and GVN agencies in psychological operations'. For JUSPAO this particularly involved learning about the doubts, fears, and 'psychological weaknesses' of the individual NLF soldier. It was hoped that if data could be properly exploited, JUSPAO could increase the number of defections and surrenders from the ranks of the NLF. Again, the emphasis on the *individual* soldier was significant to JUSPAO's governmental strategy of creating and appealing to 'enlightened self-interest'. Of paramount interest to JUSPAO interrogators on this account were the dynamics of 'social isolation' among NLF soldiers and paramilitaries. JUSPAO guidance therefore instructed interrogators specifically to probe defectors on the causes of anxiety during recruitment, training, the course of camp life, and in combat (JUSPAO 1965c).

There were, however, reasons to doubt the reliability of interrogation data. A 1969 review of division-level psychological operations for the US Army noted that Vietnamese POWs often told interrogators what they wanted to hear, a phenomenon the Army strangely attributed to a supposed 'inherent desire to please' among the 'oriental races' (Morris 1976, 953). As Belcher (2015) notes in his analysis of the nationwide Hamlet Evaluation System, the push for data accumulation often obscured analysis, and the failure of American analysts to understand Vietnamese desires and motivations was often externalised onto the presumed inscrutability of the 'oriental character'. In the eyes of many American analysts it was the Vietnamese who were defective, not the US mission, goals, and strategy. Ironically, for the psychological warriors who believed so intensely in their ability to access and isolate the Vietnamese individual, they ultimately remained far more

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isolated from the real desires, motivations, and 'self-interestedness' they believed to be the levers of their psychological war.

Neither the Army nor JUSPAO appeared overly interested in the structural effect occupation and imprisonment had on the integrity of their research, opting rather to displace these contradictions onto an orientalist and racial imaginary. Despite their unreliability, POW interrogations remained the primary indicator used by the US Army to evaluate its psychological war efforts, followed closely by rates of enemy defection (Morris 1976, 951). Though privileged for their easy quantifiability, defection rates were also a compromised metric due to the difficulty of determining accurate numbers without duplication across agencies and areas of responsibility. Furthermore, American officers often exhibited the purportedly 'oriental trait' of seeking to please their superiors. Pressure to meet or exceed previous quotas led many US staff officers to either accept uncritically or actively inflate defection figures to paint a picture of progress.

JUSPAO research on Vietnamese villages and villagers encountered many of the same territorial obstacles as did their operational counterparts. In 1967, JUSPAO conducted a Nationwide Hamlet Survey of 125 Hamlets in fifteen provinces spread throughout all four corps regions. A total of 1,313 individuals were interviewed in privacy and given a questionnaire. An attempt was made to use random sampling methods to account for population spread; however, the survey was restricted to locations that were 'reasonably secure and accessible' (JUSPAO 1967). Though the survey provided quantitative data on rates of media consumption and other quantifiable metrics, there is reason to believe that conducting research in these 'secure and accessible' territories in fact compromised the reliability of the data.

Whereas the survey's less political questions produced a plurality of answers, on political questions there was an overwhelming if suspicious consensus. For example, 81 per cent of respondents expressed 'satisfaction' with the military forces providing for their 'protection' against the NLF, with only 6 per cent expressing dissatisfaction. More than half of the respondents claimed they 'did not know' when asked who was responsible for the prolongation of the war, with 28 per cent blaming the 'Viet Cong', 5 per cent blaming the United States, and a mere 2 per cent blaming the Government of Vietnam. When surveyed about attitudes towards the Viet Cong, one-third of respondents gave the puzzling response that they were 'merely Vietnamese', while well over half were effusive in their condemnation, rendering the NLF variously as tyrannical, brutal, inhuman, terrorist, totalitarian, enemies of the people, traitors to the nation, and so on (JUSPAO 1967, 5–6). These vocal denouncements of the NLF echoed official US–GVN lines, perhaps unsurprisingly given that respondents might well have been fearful of being seen as NLF sympathisers by American and GVN officials.

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The massive Hamlet Evaluation System begun in 1966 was also taken as an indicator of the psychological war's progress, though here again problems concerning the translation of qualitative into quantitative data were rife (Barnes 2015; Belcher 2015). One of the final large-scale analyses of the psychological war was the fourth of the ARPA-funded Human Sciences Research Inc. studies. Taking place between September 1969 and June 1971, it was among the first systematic attempts to survey the audiences of JUSPAO projects and determine attitudes towards them. The project was coordinated with other surveying agencies, notably the countrywide Pacification Attitude Analysis System and the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support Local Survey Detachment teams.

A final 1972 report on the ARPA study opened with the grand claim that 'the detached observer can view his subjects as a biologist observes an insect under the microscope' (Havron *et al*. 1972, 1). If the statement reflected the hubris of US psychological warriors, it also reflected their realisation, remarkably late in the war's course, that a lack of cultural knowledge had stymied their efforts. At the same time, emphasis on 'cultural information' remained imbedded in a theory of psychological warfare as 'acts of communication, the effectiveness of which depends largely upon the compatibility of certain tacit assumptions of the communication with those of its intended recipient'. While cultural knowledge was doubtless an important factor for psychological warriors, the study nonetheless reinscribed the working assumption that modification and mastery of strategies of communication could be 'psychologically' effective irrespective of their material relation to the war's political contours.

The ARPA study first sought quantifiable data on the biographic and demographic characteristics of interviewees. Specific and specifying questions concerning age, sex, religion, occupation, income, housing, and children sought to understand the socio-economic contours of the individuals in the village. The study then attempted to map patterns and structures of communication within each village, collecting data on rates of consumption for various media including radio, television, newspapers, books and magazines, loudspeakers, movies, posters, and leaflets. In addition to formal media, the study queried informal, word-of-mouth, and face-to-face communication, notably about the individuals to whom respondents turned for information and advice, such as village and hamlet officials, religious leaders, teachers, and so forth.

In an attempt to supplement this quantitative data, the study sought to 'assess the ways in which [the interviewee] looked at the world about him' (Havron *et al*. 1972, 19–21). Here again the 'values orientations' theory of Florence and Clyde Kluckhohn attempted to map the qualitative contours of the villages' population through the grid of human nature (good, evil, mixture), the 'man–nature relationship' (submission, harmony, dominance), time (traditional, situational, goal-oriented), activity (achievement, expressive, inner development), and 'relational'

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(formalistic, peer-oriented, individualistic). As noted previously, however, the findings of the study were wildly inconclusive: the study failed to find meaningful correlations to nearly all the supposed 'values orientations', and in the case of 'human nature' it omitted the results altogether.

In contrast to the study's opening claim that it could 'observe subjects as a biologist observes an insect', its bathetic findings illustrated American psychological warfare's continued isolation from its would-be laboratory subjects. For example, the study found it both noteworthy and surprising that few interviewees felt the behaviour of their fellow man stemmed from 'inherently evil' motives. Equally surprising for US psychological warriors was the finding that ostensibly 'traditional' interviewees felt human beings should be 'dominant' over nature, a supposedly 'modern value orientation'. In a footnote to the study, the authors explained away the 'rather surprising finding' as an aspect of the idiosyncratic nature of the 'scaled response'. 'Suffice it to say' the authors protested, 'that Americans were far more dominant than Vietnamese' (Havron *et al*. 1972, 27).

The data that could be conclusively analysed challenged the hubris of erstwhile American assumptions about the malleability of Vietnamese subjects and the presumed ability of new media such as television to build relationships of government. The study found that formal means of communication, such as radio and newspapers, were considered by respondents as less credible than informal word-of-mouth channels, with village leaders, teachers, and religious figures remaining the most credible sources. The study found, moreover, that when respondents *did* consume formal media, they strongly favoured entertainment programming – especially music and drama – over American and GVN political programming. While these felicitous pursuits may indeed have represented 'constructive uses of time' for the counterinsurgency project, it remains doubtful that JUSPAO's psychological warfare in Vietnam approached its goal of the 'reconstruction of individuals as assets of government'.

Like its predecessors, the ARPA study was able to present quantitative data concerning, for example, the production and circulation of literature, or rates of enemy defection, but offered few conclusions concerning the effectiveness of psychological war programmes. Despite a two-year timeline and a budget over half a million dollars, the project concluded that 'it has not been possible to measure the effectiveness of psyop programs with any degree of accuracy' (Bairdain *et al.* 1972, 23). Other reports were equally bleak. A report prepared for ARPA's Office of Defense Research in 1967 noted that there were few, if any, technically acceptable criteria for the evaluation of psychological warfare (Robinson 1976, 778, 784). Moreover, the report warned that 'it is probably impossible to develop a criterion to evaluate the success of a total psywar effort because of the extreme complexity of the subject'. Ironically, however, pronouncements on the impossibility of

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effective evaluation often carried with them the implication that *because* psychological warfare couldn't prove its worth, it needn't do so.

Conclusion

The establishment of the United States Information Agency in 1953 at the recommendation of C. D. Jackson and his Committee on International Information Activities was meant to expunge the increasingly pejorative language of 'psychological warfare' from overt American foreign policy. As I showed in the previous chapter, American psychological warfare during this period was largely carried out by the CIA, as in its ersatz grassroots 'Crusade for Freedom' at home and abroad. As the overt arm of American international public diplomacy, the early USIA attempted to carry on the OWI's 'strategy of truth' by advertising and circulating cultural commodities depicting American liberal-capitalist lifestyles. In response to global anti-colonial and independence movements, however, during the Kennedy administration American foreign policy became increasingly concerned with counterinsurgency theory and practice, especially in the global South.

In this chapter I have traced the arc of the USIA's 'counterinsurgency turn' under the directorship of Edward R. Murrow and the Kennedy administration. Drawing upon recently declassified archival materials, I have shown that the USIA played a key role in the Kennedy administration's increasingly interdepartmental 'whole of government' approach to global counterinsurgency. I have detailed the way in which the USIA's membership in Robert Kennedy's interdepartmental Special Group on Counterinsurgency transformed the USIA into what Murrow identified as an 'arm of foreign policy'. In contrast to previous, vaguer commitments to 'tell America's story to the world', the counterinsurgency turn at Murrow's USIA involved not the advertisement of the American lifestyle, but direct efforts to support allied governments – often repressive and authoritarian ones – against popular left-wing political movements. Often couched in the language of 'political education', Murrow's USIA attempted to set up governmental circulation to establish lines of 'communication as *police*', not between the United States and the populations of foreign countries, but between those people and their own governments. This problem of establishing government, more than the vaguely defined ideological projects, quickly emerged as a territorial problem.

The territorial problem of establishing government through communication was exacerbated in many of the USIA's so-called counterinsurgency countries by those countries' limited economic development, largely rural populations, and lack of existing communication infrastructure. In countries with limited active political and military opposition to American-allied governments, the territorial problem of instituting communication as police appeared as a matter of

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establishing pastoral power, that is, of producing circulation as a bridge between government and the governed at the scales of both the individual and the population. Through a close reading of the correspondences and reports of American psychological warriors, especially in East Asia, I have argued that American psychological warriors were deeply committed to a pastoral political imagination. The belief that the United States could produce 'mystical transformations' – that it could de- and re-construct both whole societies and individuals *as such* – was a central conceit of many American psychological warriors turned modernisation theorists, such as MIT Center for International Studies alumni Daniel Lerner and Douglas Pike. Ironically, Americans' faith in their ability to transmute foreign populations into resources of government often reproduced the hyperbolic tropes of the psychological war scares that proliferated in the American press, as in the early 1940s, and again in the 1950s with the threat of 'Chinese brainwashing' (Lemov 2011). In this sense the ouroboros of psychological warfare again turned in upon itself, and American foreign policy believed it was capable of visiting upon others what it imagined others had tried to visit upon it.

Central to the United States' belief in the power of its psychological warfare was faith in the social sciences and their ability to construct grids of intelligibility through which foreign populations and societies could be reconstructed and *policed*, or at least prevented from establishing communist governments. I have shown that in Vietnam the 'values orientation theory' of Clyde Kluckhohn became a dominant lens through which American social scientists attempted to assay Vietnamese individuals and populations. While Kluckhohn's failure to accept the full humanity of his Japanese and Vietnamese subjects limited his understanding of them, his work gave a scientistic gloss to a racialised colonial imaginary. By their own admission, social scientists working with Kluckhohn's values orientation theory in Vietnam largely failed in 'isolating and delineating' the 'key sociological factors' they believed would constitute the power-knowledge necessary for establishing pastoral power and its 'mystical transformations'.

Thus the 'common villager' on whom the psychological war was thought to turn remained perpetually elusive as efforts to interview and interrogate them ran aground on the reticence and dissimulations of actual villagers towards American surveying techniques. Though American military power gave it access to prisoners of war and captive subjects in occupied villages, it could not establish the confessional discourses on which pastoral power rests – it could neither *make speak* nor establish the lines of communication necessary to govern the territory it occupied. Furthermore, American efforts to reproduce the communist confessional technique of self-criticism were frustrated by American psychological warriors' *own* ideological blocks, namely their inability to understand Vietnamese resistance in political and material terms. Like the modernisation theorist Lucian Pye, many American psychological warriors believed that communism's appeal was indeed

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'psychological' and could therefore be met on the 'battlefield of the mind' without recourse to political and material reality.

For all their insistence on transforming the Vietnamese people into a resource of government, American psychological warriors demonstrated a studied ignorance of the political agency on which pastoral power rests. Through its economic and technological resources, the United States could establish modes of formal information circulation connecting the population and government of Vietnam; however, their inability and seeming unwillingness to understand the political contours of Vietnamese resistance to government meant that they established few real lines of communication. With the escalation of the war and the establishment of JUSPAO in 1965, the circulation of newspapers, films, posters, pamphlets, radio broadcasts, and television programmes drastically increased as American psychological warriors attempted to establish a pastoral power over Vietnamese territory. In Foucauldian (2007, 278) terms, it was a police project to 'actively make use of [the public's] attitudes, opinions, and ways of doing things'. In reality, however, there was little evidence to suggest that psychological war efforts had an appreciable effect on Vietnamese public opinion. Attempts to quantify psychological warfare's effects were also by admission inconclusive, and the qualitative indicator of the NLF's continued strength painted a similarly bleak picture.

Failure to establish meaningful lines of communication to the Vietnamese people was exacerbated by the gruesome violence and brutality of the American war on Vietnam. Indeed, as my archival excavation of American psychological war in Vietnam reveals, reports and correspondence between psychological warriors often betrayed a seemingly bizarre distance from, and refusal to quarrel with, the war's violence. Despite the emphasis on the *productivity* of psychological warfare, its constructive nature, the strategy of *felicity* and *élan*, American psychological warfare was never divorced from its destructive role in justifying and advertising American military violence. Eventually tethered to President Richard Nixon's aptly named 'madman theory', American psychological warfare was both farcical and tragic, its schizophrenic incoherence reflected in its attempt to emphasise the 'brutality of the communist system' while also stressing and demonstrating American capitalism's 'unlimited industrial capacity' for destruction. While psychological warfare in Vietnam may have failed to produce quantified or even *quantifiable* results, it remained a useful concept in which 'intangible criteria invited unlimited destruction' (Sherry 1987, 251).

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Conclusion

Since the end of the Vietnam War, discussion of psychological warfare in the United States has waned, but with notable exceptions: during Ronald Reagan's presidency the spectre of Soviet 'active measures' against the United States was raised during the so-called 'second Cold War' (Dalby 2016), and in the 21st century the promise of psychological warfare was hailed as a central component of a revamped US counterinsurgency strategy in the Middle East. In both cases, as in the Vietnam War, the failures of psychological warfare to 'win hearts and minds' abroad led to its quiet retreat from popular geopolitical discourses. It was, therefore, precisely at the moment when psychological warfare seemed destined for reconsignment to history that the shocks of both the Trump presidency and the Brexit referendum vaulted psychological warfare back into the political spotlight. Since 2016, reporting on Russian psychological warfare against the West has driven news cycles, animated high-level official investigations, and led to the creation of new government initiatives to counter foreign political influence (Klippenstein & Fang 2022).

Central to psychological warfare's popular revival have been political imaginations of cataclysm and rupture. Long-form popular essays have stressed the novelty of 'The New Cold War' and the 'New Theory of War' that animates it (Osnos *et al*. 2017; Rutenberg 2017). Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), for example, has claimed that Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election was 'an act of hybrid warfare'. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), among others, called Russian interference a 'political Pearl Harbor' (Chalfant 2017). Hillary Clinton's characterisation of Russian efforts as 'a kind of cyber 9/11' (Persio 2017) meanwhile carried similar implications of an epochal shift in national security priorities. While these imaginaries situate psychological war in different times and places, they are all deeply suggestive of fundamental changes to contemporary political reality. In these geopolitical imaginations we appear to embark upon a *new world*. As Council on Foreign Relations fellow Timothy Snyder put it,

> after the Cold War, we moved *into a different world*, a world defined by the internet, and that's *a much more psychological world*. The techniques they've been honing for

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> decades are much more powerful in this *new digital world*, where emotion dominates and everyone is connected … This is *a world of information warfare*, and that suits Russia's strengths. (Cited in Illing 2018, emphasis mine)

As with its arrival on the political scene in the early 1940s, contemporary discourses about psychological warfare have emphasised not only specific instances of propaganda or influence, but also a broader and more fundamental transformation of the geography of war. Just as Nelson Rockefeller insisted that German psychological warfare in the 1940s had created 'a new geography of defense', so too has contemporary discourse on Russian psychological warfare emphasised the fact of a 'new world' of insecurity. This 'new world' of online, socially mediated psychological warfare appears to invert the geopolitical imaginations of the 21st century's War on Terror in which, as one analyst put it, 'disconnectedness defined danger' (Barnett 2005). By contrast, the 'new world' of psychological war appears porous, hyperconnected, and 'deeply at odds with imaginative geographies of security and exclusion' (Bialasiewicz *et al*. 2007, 418).

If Russian psychological warfare is said to transform contemporary geopolitical space, it also appears to have produced a strange, contradictory temporality in which it appears technologically futuristic yet timelessly antiquated. On the one hand, as *Time* magazine suggests, 'the Russians are 10 years ahead of us in being willing to make use of social media to influence public opinion' (Calabresi 2017). For *Politico*, contemporary Russian psychological warfare also appears highly sophisticated and technologically advanced, 'an elaborate information architecture to use against the American public', one whose primary purposes are 'active measures, reflexive control and psychological warfare' (McKew 2017). Yet as Russian psychological warfare is framed in terms of technological advances and strategic innovations, its ostensible novelty has been strangely juxtaposed against claims that it also represents a fixed and unchanging strategy unique to a geostrategically static Russian state. Appearing to contradict his previous statements concerning the unprecedented 'new world' of Russia's psychological war, Snyder also claims that 'Russia doesn't really change, but [that] they've always led the world in understanding the psychology of power. Psychological warfare', he claims, 'is what they've done best going all the way back to the Bolsheviks' (Illing 2018).

The Foreign Policy Research Institute's Clint Watts has similarly suggested that 'it's the same playbook they [the Russians] used in the Cold War era' (Graf 2017). More than a recurrence of the specific Cold War conjuncture, however, Russia's contemporary actions appear in US political discourse as evidence of a kind of timeless and essential difference. 'Russia's active-measures playbook', suggested *WIRED* magazine,

> dates back to Czarist Russia and the beginning of the Soviet Union. It has been honed and deployed over decades to advance Russian interests both at home and abroad – and has long been driven by a consistent geopolitical worldview, executed in distinct

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> ways, and guided by a unique tradecraft philosophy at odds with the approach of Western intelligence services. (Graf 2017)

Apart from the orientalist tones flattening the major upheavals of 20th-century Russian social history into a kind of timeless and unchanging geopolitical state, this characterisation of a static Russian geopolitical worldview itself appears as a rescripting of the United States' own Cold War geopolitical imaginations. As the same Foreign Policy Research Institute's Robert Strausz-Hupé wrote in 1959, 'Communists take a very long-term view of conflict, seeing themselves in a perpetual state of revolutionary war':

> Thus, in periods the West conceptualizes as peaceful, the Soviet Union is still, if not explicitly, engaged in revolutionary warfare. Furthermore, protracted conflict strategy is one that utilizes all aspects of social, political, psychological, and economical warfare … It is a total view of warfare, the revolutionary doctrine dominating all aspects of society. (Cited in Crampton & Toal 1996, 548)

Russian psychological warfare therefore appears in contemporary political discourse as both past and future, a contradictory temporal phenomenon both inferior and superior to the United States' capabilities. As Gerard Toal (1996, 177) argues, if the loss of the Soviet polestar in the early 1990s 'deprived international affairs of an organising script and a defining drama', the result was that, for the US foreign policy establishment, history became 'no longer a fixed representational scene but a vertigo-inducing experience'. As the organising scripts grounding US foreign policy during the 21st century's War on Terror have begun to fray, the revival of psychological warfare in popular political discourse now induces a new round of geopolitical vertigo. The contradictory temporality that governs US geopolitical scripting of Russian psychological warfare thus appears as both the 'discovery' of new and secret practices of statecraft and as their *rediscovery* as static features of an unchanging and alien political-military culture.

Just as German psychological warfare was purported to produce a 'new geography of defense' in the 1940s, so too has the 'new world' of contemporary psychological warfare been defined by calls for the United States to meet the demands of a new political reality. As Lt. Col. Brad Carr, director of information operations at US Army Special Operations Command, told the *Army Times*,

> given Russian disinformation, given this new world where the information fight is becoming more complex and nuanced, there's a level of pride when I can say, I'm a PSYOP soldier in a PSYOP unit that has this lineage and did these kinds of things. (Myers 2017)

Whereas US Army psychological warfare during the Obama administration had been terminologically rebranded to the softer-sounding 'military information support operations', since 2016 the perceived threat of Russian psychological

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warfare has allowed the United States to re-embrace the language and symbolism of psychological war – to 'switch back to good ol' psyop' (Myers 2017). More than a specific set of practices and strategies, however, the return of psychological warfare to popular political discourses has revived the mythologies and moral economies that this book has set out to critique.

Perhaps nowhere have these mythologies been more visible than in the US Army's attempt to rebrand and recruit for its contemporary psychological warfare units. In the spring of 2022, the US Army's 4th Psychological Operations Group released a short recruitment film on YouTube titled 'Ghosts in the Machine' (US Army 2022). In just a few months, the film collected over one million views and generated numerous commentaries and reactions. While commentators noted the film's sleek production and haunting affective atmosphere, press coverage largely failed to interrogate the film's deeper claims and evocations. Saturated in psychological war myth-making, the recruitment film opens with a quotation of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, invoking psychological warfare's long-held claim to esoteric wisdom and an imagined ancient origin. Amid scenes of political protest and unrest, a dissonant whistling melody opens the film to a light-soaked image of an orchestra conductor. On-screen text hails the viewer: 'have you ever wondered who's pulling the strings?'

In the staccato procession of images, sound, and text that follows, the Army film endeavours to show that it is psychological warriors who do indeed pulls the strings. To the orchestra conductor are added other recurring images connoting power, control, precision, and expertise: a chessboard suggests deep strategy and intellectual acumen; the interlocking gears of an open-faced pocket watch suggest technological accuracy and craftsmanship; a concert pianist suggests virtuosic skill and creative genius. Together the images work to portray the psychological warrior as an elite artist-technician who asserts an unseen influence over the global political scene. 'Warfare is evolving', the film suggests as its orchestra conductor concludes its performance, 'and all the world's a stage'.

Less subtle is the video's identification of geopolitical threats to the United States. 'A threat rises in the East' overlays a scene of a Chinese military parade. A Times Square news ticker announces 'Russia invades Ukraine' as a cinematic depiction of Genghis Khan's charging horsemen morphs into a scene of modern mechanised infantry. Beyond these specific geopolitical markers, however, the film invokes a geographical imagination of psychological warfare's broader spatial ubiquity: urban scenes of subway stations and city buses blend into a moonlight raid on a dilapidated civilian residence. An image of the earth's transition from night to day suggests not only the dawn of psychological warfare's proverbial 'new world', but also its global scale and geographical extension. Text reading 'we are everywhere' dispenses with subtext. As this book has shown, the premise that psychological warfare has 'no limits in space' (Taylor 1940, 4) has been foundational

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to its geographical imagination since its construction in the early 1940s. It is perhaps unsurprising that the re-enchantment of psychological warfare has revived a spatial imagination of ubiquity and intractability from both international relations and everyday life.

In its contemporary iteration, the idea that psychological warfare is a kind of 'everywhere war' (Gregory 2011a) combines with the moral-economic tenet of its masculine prerogative. 'Born from the ashes of a world at war', reads another title card, 'you'll find us in the shadows at the tip of the spear.' Here the psychological warrior appears not only ubiquitous, but also as a hunter in the dark, lurking in shadows, poised to pounce on unsuspecting prey. If the US psychological cold warrior was presented as an upstanding figure, a guarantor of truth, and a liberal-democratic bulwark against the evils of communism, the character of the contemporary psychological warrior appears by contrast in the idiom of the special forces 'operator', a destabilising hunter–killer wrapped in stealth, duplicity, mystery, and violence (see Van Veeren 2019; Wills & Steuter 2009). While the psychological cold warrior's domination of the Other was couched in a Christian cosmology in which the divinity of US 'truth' and democracy underwrote the moral agency of the psychological warrior-as-patriarch, the 'operator' paradigm of military masculinity depicts the contemporary psychological warrior instead as a figure of brawling, anti-heroic frontier masculinity: 'anything we touch is a weapon' continues the on-screen text, paired with images of microphones and paint brushes. In the age of 'post-truth' political paranoia, US psychological warfare offers the promise not of restoring order to a fractured political landscape, but of being the manipulative antagonist on the other end of the spear. Perhaps ironically, the recruitment film offers the prospective recruit the opportunity to embody the very nightmare vision of foreign psychological warfare that has perennially haunted the American body politic.

Yet as contemporary psychological warfare re-enchants itself with egomaniacal masculinity, esoteric knowledge, virtuosic genius, and technological control, it also draws incongruously upon themes of the occult and the supernatural. This too has been central to psychological warfare's contradictory mythologies since its earliest days, from Edmond Taylor's portrayal of German psychological warfare as a kind of 'magical war of witch-doctors' to Douglas Pike's insistence on the 'mystical transformation' of the Vietnamese individual. Here too the psychological warrior achieves its own mystical transformation: in its claim that 'anything we touch is a weapon', US psychological warfare not only celebrates an agential masculinity, it also suggests a kind of Midas touch in which the banal world of civilian life is transubstantiated into the body of war, a kind of mystical transformation through which the world is remade.

In the film's climactic scene, its claim to the supernatural becomes most overt as the film's themes collapse into the allegorical figure of the titular 'ghost

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in the machine'. A tightly shot, deliberately unsettling scene of a clown applying white makeup appears amid scenes of war and political conflict. While the clown remains an ambiguous figure in the film, the scene's tense affect alludes to the application of 'war paint' common in the American Western film genre. For the recruitment-aged male, the image of the clown might also allude to the 2019 film *Joker*, in which the comic book villain turned anti-hero becomes an avatar of disaffected male youth. As the makeup is completed, a television set fades into view. On its screen a 1933 *Betty Boop* animated short depicts a cartoon clown, an animated analogy to the one in the previous scene. The clown dances across the screen with an unnatural, almost hovering gait. The film's music builds to a crescendo that climaxes as a witch passes a magic mirror over top of the clown's head, a process that strips the clown of its corporeal form, leaving only a spectral ghost that continues to float and lilt across the screen. The camera pans out to reveal that the television set upon which this scene has played out is on fire (Figure 5.1).

In this climactic scene, the film's use of the horror genre is most pronounced, a point noted by 4th Psyop Group commander Col. Chris Stangle. 'The artist behind the video tailored it a bit after iconic horror film *Jaws*', he notes. 'The filmmakers showed restraint in actually showing the shark. Instead, viewers knew it was lurking just below the surface' (Britzky 2022). While the horror genre has been central to political imaginaries of psychological warfare from its earliest days, it has generally been used to characterise the psychological war of *enemy* countries directed at the United States. If the revival of psychological warfare has been associated with contemporary 'post-truth' crises, it is notable that US psychological warfare has

Figure 5.1 'Ghosts in the Machine' (US Army 2022)

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departed from its traditional tendency to appear as a benevolent and stabilising force. More than a necessary if begrudging response to an enemy offensive, US psychological warfare now advertises its own aspiration to embody the fear and uncertainty of the contemporary political moment.

If the role of 'truth' in the moral economy of 20th-century US psychological warfare was to establish, distribute, and manifest the ontological and epistemic security of American empire, here truth appears not as an evangelising force, but as a kind of esoteric, almost occult possession guarded from the public and exploited by a psychological warrior elite. While this book has shown that US psychological warfare has often been coordinated and conducted in secret, it has generally eschewed political imaginaries of conspiracy when characterising its own activities. In its contemporary recruitment drive, however, US psychological warfare actively adorns itself in the symbolism of conspiracy, but with the promise that the new recruit may attain the initiate's knowledge. The film therefore makes use of the 'paranoid style' in American politics, offering the disaffected civilian a chance to hold the other end of the spear.

The symbolism of the film's climactic magic mirror thus suggests the revelation of a hidden world – a world of secret power and political machinations. At the same time, the mirror also represents the transformation of the individual, a kind of baptismal epiphany in which the truth not only of the world but also of the self is revealed. No longer burdened by the trappings of its flesh, the shambolic clown is shorn of its corporeal form; it is transformed into pure spirit and will, the ostensible raw materials of psychological war. It promises that, having passed through the looking glass, the recruit may take leave of the material world of disaffection and confusion to become the spectre haunting its enemies, a reactionary fantasy of power and self-possession. Yet the mirror image is also a mirror image: it represents not only the mystical transformation of the self, but also the transformation of the Other as the achievement of the psychological warrior. This conceit has long underwritten the political imagination of psychological war, from Barry Zorthian's (1965) claim that the United States could 'reconstruct' the Vietnamese individual, to more recent claims about Russian psychological warfare 'breaking down [the individual] from within' (Illing 2018).

As this book has argued, the power to achieve the 'mystical transformation' of the Other has in reality been elusive. While psychological warfare purports to be 'everywhere', like the shark beneath the surface, it nevertheless seems to remain always just out of view. As *Politico* has recently suggested, Russian psychological warfare is a 'sophisticated operation constructed within American society and media that we still do not see clearly' (McKew 2017). Or as *Time* magazine put it, 'the 2016 Russian operation was just the most visible battle in an ongoing information war against global democracy' (Calabresi 2017). The foreboding, paranoiac spectre of psychological warfare as something that is everywhere yet always

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elusive further serves to re-centre the individual in all their corporeality as its key terrain and site of struggle. Indeed, while the individual may not be able to escape the reach of psychological war, they may nevertheless endeavour to secure themselves against it.

Here the final 'mystical transformation' of the individual takes place: by attaining appropriate knowledge, the individual may become the modern iteration of Edmond Taylor's 'nerve private', one who wages psychological warfare in, through, and over oneself. 'If it sounds alarming', advises *Time* magazine, 'it helps to *understand* the battlespace of this new information war' (Calabresi 2017, emphasis mine). Or as *Politico* suggests, for the contemporary US citizen, 'understanding how the Kremlin has tried to achieve [its goal] is absolutely essential' (McKew, 2017). This injunction to *understand* reflects the 'obligation to know' (Foucault 2014b, 291) that has defined popular conceptions of self-defence in psychological war while also collapsing the scale of the geopolitical onto the scale of the individual. Not only does this geopolitical 'obligation to know' shrink the terrain of the political to the personal, it constitutes the individual as a kind of 'double subject' of war (Foucault 2014b, 81): the individual is seen not only as an object and target of enemy technique, but also and crucially as a *subject* of war with an active, participatory role to play. If Edmond Taylor originated the claim that in psychological war 'the only defense is understanding' (*New York Times*, 18 June 1940), contemporary psychological war discourse has similarly stressed the agency of ordinary individuals to participate in self-*cum*-national defence. 'If you understand what the Kremlin is up to, the news is grim', reports *Politico*, 'but it also gives us a clear path to fight back.'

Beyond specific factual knowledge of the true and the false, of political and geopolitical affairs, psychological warfare ultimately posits a kind of *self-knowledge* as the final line of defence. As one former Central Intelligence Agency analyst suggests, 'if we are confident in ourselves, these Russian attacks have little effect' (Sipher 2018). Here it is not knowledge of the world, but knowledge of the self, that is in question. If the sexual politics of psychological warfare have stressed the 'penetration' of individuals in ways that mirror anxieties surrounding the porous and permeable nation, self-defence appears as the reaffirmation of what Deutsche (1991, 27) calls the otherwise assumed 'complete masculine subject'. Indeed, as Snyder warns, 'Russia was always better than us when it came to penetrating their enemies and breaking them down from within' (Illing 2018). To defend against the emasculation of psychological war is therefore to steel oneself against enemy incursion, not necessarily through the acquisition of external, factual truths, but through a kind of talismanic self-knowledge. Psychological warfare thus involves the formulation of what Foucault (2014a, 19) calls 'the strange truth that the individual must produce about himself'. To secure oneself against psychological war is to secure 'not only a docile body but also an anxious, self-disclosing citizen'

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(Salter 2007, 49). A strange truth indeed: as Clint Watts put it, 'you cannot counter back … unless you know what your nation's policies are, what your belief systems are' (Seldin 2017). In this strange formulation, vulnerability to psychological war consists in *not knowing who you are*.

As this book has argued, these political imaginations of psychological warfare often have little basis in reality, their power ephemeral. This is not to deny the power of propaganda. On the contrary, this book has shown how coordinated propaganda efforts such as the campaign to fund Radio Free Europe in the early 1950s can enjoy lasting and meaningful success. Indeed, the very idea of 'psychological war' itself owes much to the success of propaganda coordinated by British and American intelligence actors in the early 1940s. This book has thus in large part attempted to understand psychological warfare as a kind of 'propaganda about propaganda'. Where propaganda does succeed, however, it is rarely the result of the kind of social-scientific, technological, or indeed mystical acumen so often credited to psychological warriors. Rather, it is generally the achievement of a more direct and banal exploitation of social, political, and economic capital, forms of exploitation that the more mystified visions of psychological warfare serve to obscure. Where these connections are made, real manipulation of public opinion remains possible and probable. Where they are not, as in the United States' efforts to 'win hearts and minds' in places such as Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, psychological warfare appears anaemic and ineffectual.

While it may ultimately be impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of psychological warfare campaigns – a conclusion reached by the United States' own retrospectives on the Vietnam War – the shadow they cast on US political culture has been and remains significant. In contrast to standard claims that psychological warfare is as 'old as war itself', this book has attempted to lay out the specific and contingent circumstances under which the idea of psychological warfare was conceived, how it was made socially legible, and the kinds of political, military, and cultural activities it has licensed. Psychological warfare is more than it seems, but also in some ways less. This book has attempted to provide tools for meeting popular claims concerning psychological warfare with due scepticism. It has shown that claims concerning the ubiquity and invisibility of psychological warfare have often led to more definite, visible, and traditional forms of war. The cause of psychological warfare has furthermore served to strengthen relationships between government and industry. As renewed calls for a 'strategy of truth' now appear directed towards the algorithmic and digital platforms of social media, it remains to be seen to what ends a new strategy of truth will be put. How will spiritual war be waged in the 21st century? Will the war of words again turn ballistic?

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